Exploring Implications and Benefits of Holistic Working with Young People who have Sexually Harmed Others

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

De Montfort University

September 2010

Abstract

Over the past twenty years there has been growing recognition that young people who have sexually harmed should not simply be treated as younger versions of adult sex offenders. Changes in terminology and recommended treatment reflect the fact that these young people are still developing and have a range of strengths and needs including harmful sexual behaviour. In acknowledging the harm caused by sexual abuse to victims it is also important to see that many young perpetrators have also been victims of abuse, domestic violence and sexual exploitation.

Practitioners and Government reports have asserted that work with these young people should be holistic, but this word 'holistic' is used with a range of meanings and emphases. This study identifies broadly accepted meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed and presents associated benefits, challenges and implications for practice.

The study used a mixed methods approach, utilising an initial breadth survey of practitioners across England and Wales before focusing in on a depth study based in one city Youth Offending Team. Key themes from the breadth survey were tested during the fieldwork placement with observations and interviews with professionals within the team and external therapists, social workers and residential staff. Additional interviews included contributions from volunteer panel members, young people and a parent.

Grounded theory analysis led to the identification of four main themes of holistic work: seeing the whole young person; working with wider family and peers; working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. Findings are discussed in relation to 'what works' and 'evidence based practice'. Each of these areas contributes benefits and challenges to the work and leads to implications for practice. The study concludes with recommendations for practitioners and policy-makers to make work more holistic and effective.

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Research funded by Quota Studentship from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Acronyms

ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee (replaced by LSCBs)
AIM	Assessment, Intervention, Moving On (HSB Project)
CAF	Common Assessment Framework (DCSF form)
CAMHS	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools & Families (now Dept. for Education)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (now Department for Education)
DH	Department of Health
DHSS	Department of Health and Social Security
DTO	Detention and Training Order
G-MAP	(Greater Manchester Adolescent Programme –HSB Project)
HSB	Harmful Sexual Behaviour
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MST	Multi Systemic Therapy
NCH	National Children's Home (now Action for Children)
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PCT	Primary Care Trust
RMP	Risk Management Plan (YJB form)
ROSH	Risk Of Serious Harm (YJB form)
SWAAY	(formerly Social Work for Abused and Abusing Youth – HSB Project)
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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Note:

All tables and figures are designed to be read within the context of the full document and in relation to work with young people who have sexually harmed others. Care should be taken when considering a wider applicability for the findings which may not be supported by the research completed to date.

Acknowledgements

I am sincerely grateful for the unstinting support and encouragement of my first supervisor, Dr Brian Stout, who has always seen the best in my work and efficiently helped smooth the way through academic and administrative challenges. Grateful thanks also go to my second supervisor, Professor Hazel Kemshall, who has provided thoughtful and incisive feedback as well as generous guidance at key stages.

Many thanks also to others within the Faculty at De Montfort University. Julie Fish was a positive and helpful chair of my annual reviews while others generously allowed me to read their own theses. I benefited from thorough research training on the MRes course and particularly appreciated teaching from Roger Smith and Simon Dyson. Sincere thanks to Hellmüth Weich and Hazel Kemshall for a challenging and constructive mock viva examination.

Thanks as always to my family, friends and neighbours for their love and support; particularly those who have commented helpfully on draft chapters. God bless you all.

Finally grateful thanks to everyone who enabled this research by participating in the internet survey, facilitating my fieldwork observation and graciously allowing my interviews and questions. I hope I have done justice to your experiences and views.

This work was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council [grant number 2006-00236].

List of outputs from this PhD

Tackling the challenges of multi-agency working with young people who have sexually harmed. Workshop presented at *BASPCAN Congress 2009*: Swansea University on 15/09/09.

Wholly, Holy, Holey? Working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed. Workshop presented at *NOTA Conference 2009*: University of York on 24/09/09.

What does it mean to work holistically with young people who have sexually harmed? Paper presented at *Showcasing Research Conference*: University of Birmingham on 19/10/09.

Forthcoming chapter in Calder, M. (ed.) (2011) *Contemporary practice with young people who sexually abuse: Evidence-based developments.* Lyme Regis: Russell House.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

Young people who have sexually harmed others are the focus of slowly increasing attention from researchers, the Government and media. Ways of working with these young people are becoming more specific to adolescents rather than adults and more individualised, with increasing reference to working holistically. However, the use of the word 'holistic' includes a wide range of emphases and theoretical bases, rendering the concept unclear at best, and at worst almost meaningless. This research seeks to give new clarity to the meaning of working holistically with these young people, and to present some of the benefits, challenges and implications of such an approach.

Aims and research objectives

The aims of this research are to identify broadly accepted meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed; and to explore the associated benefits and implications for holistic working in practice with these young people. In pursuance of these aims, three more specific objectives were identified, namely:

- To test the theories proposed by the researcher's Master's dissertation on meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed;
- To identify further meanings, benefits, challenges and implications of working holistically with this client group; and
- To produce recommendations for policy and practice relating to holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed.

This chapter will introduce the key areas within this research including some discussion of the client group and diverse theories of holistic working. The rise to prominence of various holistic approaches within the field will demonstrate the need for more robust and broadly accepted meanings of the term 'holistic' in this context. This will lead on to

the selection of appropriate research methods to give a broad and deep view of subjective meanings and experiences, while seeking understanding of the practical benefits, challenges and implications of holistic working in practice. An indication of the findings of the research will follow, with links to the implications and recommendations which will follow in the concluding chapters.

Background and context

The user group

In introducing the main user group of this study, a brief explanation of the terminology chosen may be helpful. Literature from some sources, particularly from the USA often still uses the term 'juvenile sex offenders'; however, following some debate (Erooga & Masson, 1999 and Calder, 2005) longer but less labelling phrases such as 'young people who sexually abuse' or 'children who have sexually harmed' are generally preferred in UK literature. While some prefer to use the term 'abuse', recognising the considerable effects on victims of abuse, the use of the word 'harm' acknowledges that harm has been done, without necessarily the implied intent to abuse. While some young people who have sexually harmed will be charged with an offence, many are not, while some children are too young to have legally committed an offence. For these reasons, the term 'young people who have sexually harmed' will be used throughout this study. The choice of the past tense version, rather than 'who sexually harm' identifies the behaviour as part of the young person's past which may require intervention rather than a continuous part of their nature, avoiding the implication that they are likely to repeat the behaviour.

The need for effective work with young people who have sexually harmed was first brought to prominence in the UK by *The Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Children and Young People who Sexually Abuse Other Children* (NCH, 1992). More recently the Department of Health and the Home Office published a joint report entitled *The Needs and Effective Treatment of Young People Who Sexually Abuse: Current Evidence* (DH/ Home Office, 2006). Both these reports agree that around a quarter of alleged sexual abuse or sexual harm in the UK is committed by young people under the age of 21.

Changes in definitions in the Sexual Offences Act (2003) mean it is difficult to compare recent crime statistics with those from 2003/4 cited by Erooga & Masson (2006) but they appear broadly similar. In England and Wales in 2008/9, 1907 sexual offences resulting in a criminal disposal (ranging from Police reprimand to custodial sentence) were perpetrated by young people aged between 10 and 17 years old (YJB, 2010a) but many other acts of sexual harm will have not been through the court process or even been detected (Erooga & Masson, 2006).

Understanding of how likely these young people are to reoffend has changed since the NCH Report in 1992, and more recent professional opinion reflects evidence that the majority of young people who have sexually harmed will not go on to repeat their behaviour (Hackett et al., 2003; Weinrott, 1996; Bumby & Talbot, 2007). This adds some necessary perspective but does not remove the need to take sexual harm by young people seriously. Young people who have sexually harmed need help to understand and take responsibility for their behaviour and to develop ways to avoid future abuse (Hackett et al., 2003). Evidence that a significant proportion of adult sexual offenders first sexually harmed during adolescence (Abel et al., 1987) underlines the need for young people considered to be at higher risk of reoffending to receive thorough intervention to protect potential future victims. Some research (e.g. Vizard et al., 2007) suggests that an identifiable sub-group of young people who have sexually harmed is more likely to reoffend sexually. This further indicates the need for careful assessment and suitable interventions.

Ways of working

The literature review in chapter two will give a more comprehensive history of work with young people who have sexually harmed, which necessarily develops from a history of youth offending, a history of the recognition of child sexual abuse and responses to adult sexual offenders. At the time of the NCH Report (NCH, 1992) intervention methods were strongly influenced by adult treatment programmes and to some extent this continues today (Bumby & Talbot, 2007; Hackett et al., 2003) although UK professional consensus does stress how young people should not be treated as 'mini adult sex

offenders' (Hackett et al., 2003: p.14). Developments within the fields of youth offending, child abuse, adult sex offenders and young people who have sexually harmed will all be shown to indicate increasingly holistic ways of working. The Department of Health/ Home Office (2006) report draws on Hackett et al.'s (2003; 2006) findings that practitioners agree work should be:

- Abuse-specific – the aim is to help young people understand and accept responsibility for their behaviour and develop strategies and coping skills to avoid abusing or offending again;
- Holistic – the goal is to promote the physical, sexual, social and emotional well-being of children and young people who have sexually harmed/abused; and
- Multi-modal – the goal is for carers to acknowledge what their child has done, believe in and support change, and take on responsibility for changing the context of the family. (DH/ Home Office, 2006: p.45; Hackett et al., 2006: p.149)

Requiring work to be abuse-specific, holistic and multi-modal seems complex and contradictory. In some ways the terms holistic and abuse-specific seem opposites, while the term multi-modal seems to imply the use of a range of techniques but is defined as meaning a family emphasis which others might include within holistic. The challenge for this research is to understand this term 'holistic' more thoroughly before moving on to explore the benefits, challenges and implications of holistic work in practice with these young people. A key definition of holistic working from Morrison (2006) will be shown to draw together themes and support the findings of this research.

Research strategy and methods

Working holistically

A simple dictionary definition of holism (and its derivative, holistic) leads to the consideration of wholes, and

> 'the theory that certain wholes are greater than the sum of their parts.' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

In the case of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, the literature review will explore how the whole can mean the whole young person (e.g.

Longo, 2002), their whole family and community context (e.g. Hackett et al., 1998), their whole situation (e.g. Morrison & Henniker, 2006) or the whole issue of sexual harm (e.g. Durham, 2006). A spectrum of theoretical influences within sexual harm literature will be identified ranging from a focus on the whole individual to the whole of society, from individualised to more systemic approaches. Wider literature will be used to demonstrate levels of holistic influence from an over-arching holistic ideology seen in wellness models (e.g. Myers and Sweeney, 2008; Weaver, 2002), the influence of holistic attitudes on professional practice (e.g. Ruch, 2005; Allen, 2003) and most specifically the use of methods described as holistic, including but not limited to creative and alternative therapies (Ernst, 2004).

Within this research, a desire for an appropriately *holistic* view of issues relating to working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed led to the adoption of a mixed methods approach. The need to examine contrasting meanings of 'holistic' held by professionals indicated an overall subjectivist paradigm where the subjective views of individuals are sought and valued. The gathering of a wide range of qualitative data supplemented by relevant quantitative material was also key to this holistic approach to research. The desire for depth of quality information alongside breadth of more generalisable data also supported the mixed methods approach. The need to link data or for triangulation of methods can also be seen within the holistic imperative to recognise how a whole is more than the sum of parts, emphasising the importance of the links and inter-relatedness (Colley, 2003).

Methodologies

This research combines subjectivist priorities of understanding meanings and experiences of holistic working with more pragmatist aims of producing findings which are useful and realistic. The dual focus of the aims and objectives illustrate this, seeking to understand meanings of working holistically before going on to consider the practical benefits, challenges and implications of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. The use of a mixed methods approach (Brannen, 2005; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) assists with gaining a holistic view of the research subject as well as

improving validity and generalisability by combining methods which seek depth and breadth of data.

A preliminary breadth survey was conducted seeking the views of a wider group of professionals across the UK regarding holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. This survey combined open and closed questions to identify key themes in holistic working which were later presented to professionals for discussion during the main study. The main research placement involved observation and interviews in a Youth Offending Team in the Midlands, UK. Ethnography frequently combines observation with the gathering of written data and interviews with individuals (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and all of these were used to seek a holistic view of the team's practice with young people who had sexually harmed. Additional interviews were also conducted with external professionals, two young people and a parent adding other outside points of view of the team.

This triangulation allowed the meanings of holistic working to be considered robust and more generalisable while pursuing further new findings regarding the benefits, challenges and implications of working holistically with these young people. The data gathered was analysed throughout the research using grounded theory techniques (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998a; Charmaz, 2006) which draw meanings and theories directly from the data which are refined and adapted as new findings emerge. Chapter three will examine and provide a detailed rationale for all these methodological choices as well as outlining the challenges of researching in a sensitive field.

Findings – meanings, benefits, challenges and implications

Emergence of main themes

Analysis of the data led to a large collection of findings which comprise chapters four to nine of this study. First an overview of the research participants and the emergence of

four main themes are discussed in chapter four. The main themes were drawn from the breadth survey and reinforced by the depth study at the Youth Offending Team and this process is described in detail with reference to quantitative and qualitative findings from the survey and supporting statements from the interviewees. The four themes are: seeing the whole young person, working with wider family and peers, working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. Each of these themes is discussed in a following chapter with supporting quotations from participants and analysis which draws on the findings and literature to propose original models and theoretical concepts. An example of the analysis process is included at the end of chapter four, showing the development of the family sub themes from line by line coding to the generated theories.

Seeing the whole young person

The primary theme from the research reflects the interpretation of holistic which focuses very much on the individual young person, but all aspects of that individual (Longo, 2002). A strong view of how the young person should be seen as more than just an offender or someone who has sexually harmed was presented by participants as well as recent literature. Recognising different aspects of the young person and their development does not exclude a need to focus at times on their harmful behaviour but this should be seen as part of a much bigger picture of a young person with needs and strengths. Chapter five includes a consideration of various wellness models before proposing a model of seeing the whole young person based on development areas from the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), (CWDC, 2010a). Benefits, challenges and implications in the area of seeing the whole young person are also discussed, including the challenges of seeing things the young person is unwilling to share and of gaining a balanced understanding of the young person's needs and strengths.

Working with wider family and peers

This second theme presents how a holistic approach looks beyond the individual to the family and peers around them (Hackett et al., 1998; Letourneau & Swenson, 2005). Family and peers are presented as people who both influence and are influenced by the

young person and their behaviour. Working with the young person's family comprises work done by professionals to help address family needs and also work done together with the family, harnessing their strengths and influence to help the young person. Chapter six presents a model of five views of family influence, showing the range of impacts from families where members are seen as 'dangerous' to families who can take the lead in managing changes for their young person. A similar range of positive and negative influences are seen from peers. In each of these areas, challenges and implications are identified for this part of holistic working.

Working in a multi-agency way

The third main theme of the research takes a view that is broader still and sees the wider systems surrounding the young person who has sexually harmed (Durham, 2006; Morrison & Henniker, 2006). The identification of a range of needs from the young person and their family frequently necessitates input from a range of professionals from fields of social work, education, health and others. Multi-agency work is both necessary and directed by law (Children Act, 2004: s10) and by the multi-professional arrangement of agencies such as Youth Offending Teams. Chapter seven draws out three key themes within multi-agency working; namely values, clarity and resources, and identifies benefits, challenges and implications from each of these.

Using a range of creative methods

The fourth main theme explores further *how* work can be delivered holistically and incorporates the more specific methods which may be described as holistic (Longo, 2002). The importance of using methods that engage the young people and family members is shown to be vital, along with the need to build a trusting relationship between the young person and the workers. Other priorities in choosing methods include practice which is considered to be evidence-based, and debate around this issue is presented. Chapter eight looks at the challenge of choosing methods which suit the young people, their families, the staff, managers and policy makers and the public. This

chapter will also address the need for methods to suit different learning styles and the question of how far holistic practice and effective practice overlap.

Fusion of findings

The inter-relatedness of the four main themes within a holistic approach is the main focus of chapter nine, which draws together the findings from the research including the contributions from the young service users. The links and overlaps between the four main themes will be stressed, while additional findings are also mentioned. Overall findings, challenges, benefits and implications are summarised in tables and diagrams. This chapter also includes consideration of times when holistic working may not be possible and how far targeted working can be viewed as an alternative or complement to a holistic approach. Towards the end of the chapter the implications of holistic working will be used to move towards recommendations for future policy and practice which will be set out in the conclusion.

Conclusions and recommendations

This research will be shown to have generated robust meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, as well as practical findings relating to the benefits, challenges and implications of this work leading to recommendations for policy and practice. Chapter ten concludes the study by summarising the content, reviewing the importance of the topic area, theoretical bases from the literature and the rationale for the methods used throughout the research. A recap of the findings will lead on to recommendations for policy makers and practitioners as well as suggestions for further research. This chapter will include an evaluation of the research, and consideration of the strengths and limitations of the study including the original contributions which have been made. The success of the research will be determined in relation to the aims and objectives of the study before the chapter closes with encouragement to put more holistic working into practice with young people who have sexually harmed.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Introduction

This review of relevant literature seeks both to offer background and context to the issues to be explored as well as to present some of the scope of themes which will be identified throughout the research. First a brief history of offending by young people will be presented, including the long-standing use of reduced penalties for juveniles and the major debate as to how welfare and justice responses can co-exist. There follows an overview of responses to child sexual abuse, in terms of the gradual increase of national awareness, the implementation of policies for child protection and the need for work with those who have offended against children. A condensed summary of responses and treatment of sexual offenders will be followed by a synthesis of these three areas, as the challenge of sexual abuse perpetrated by young people has been recognised over time and legislation and policies have been developed.

After a summary of responses to sexual harm by young people, notions of working holistically with these young people will be explored. Since a range of theories claim or imply 'holistic' influence, a spectrum of holistic work will be proposed, moving from a detailed young person based view to a wider society encompassing perspective. Other investigations into 'holistic' work in alternative fields will be examined with a view to illuminating meanings and contrasts in definitions and priorities. Some key themes within holistic working will then be explored at greater depth; namely seeing the whole young person, working with wider family and peers, working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. Within each of these areas, some of the challenges and implications of the work will be detailed as found in the literature.

Literature searching strategies

There has been considerable debate (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Glaser, 1992; Cutcliffe, 2000; McGhee et al., 2007; Tan, 2010) regarding the desirability and timing of thorough

literature searches within grounded theory studies, following the early recommendations from Glaser & Strauss (1967):

> 'An effective strategy is, at first, literally to ignore the literature of theory and fact on the area under study, in order to assure that the emergence of categories will not be contaminated by concepts more suited to different areas' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: p.37).

The relative paucity of literature regarding working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed indicated that some grounded theory ideas around literature would be relevant. The priorities of generating theory and new findings led to the decision to delay systematic reviews of extant material until later in the research process, while acknowledging the impossibility of a completely open mind following previous Master's study (Cutcliffe, 2000).

The searching strategies later adopted included library based searches for books and journal articles, online access to many Government sources including legislation and reports and access to 'grey material' including theses and dissertations, newspaper coverage and conference materials (Hart, 2001). Online databases including Scopus, PsycInfo, Medline, Academic Search Premier and the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences were scrutinised using keywords specific to the client group (e.g. for juvenile OR adolescent, plus heading Sex Offenses) as well as keyword searches (holistic AND young OR youth OR adolescent OR juvenile). Further searches focused on emerging themes such as families, engagement and multi-agency working.

Significantly, these preliminary strategies were not sufficient to access many key items of literature. Hart (2001) suggests using reference lists from relevant PhD theses, and this style of snowballing strategy was vital: mining lists from journal articles and published chapters to identify other material. Most of the literature regarding holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed is contained in edited books designed for practitioners. These articles are not always peer-reviewed to the degree expected in journal articles and are not reliably listed in databases. This adds challenges in locating literature as well as the need to scrutinise for quality. Late access to some material was helpful in adding confirmation to the findings without influencing the data collection.

Background and history

History of youth offending

Examples of reduced penalties for juvenile offending are evidenced from early Roman law and Athelstane who wrote in the 10th century (Omaji, 2003). Over centuries the sparing of children from routine adult penalties and recognition that a different response was appropriate included enforced apprenticeship to a tradesman instead of deportation in the eighteenth century (ibid.). The question of whether young people were routinely executed in the later eighteenth century is raised by Omaji citing Barman (1934); however, it transpires that although sentenced to death, in the oft cited case of Andrew Branning (a 13 year old sentenced to death following burglary and theft of a spoon in 1801) the young man was actually deported to Australia instead (Knell, 1965).

Reactions to this perceived and at times still strongly punitive response to juveniles led eventually to the legal recognition of the different consequences for offending by young people. In the USA, the recommendation was made by the Society for the Prevention of Pauperism that reformation should be the aim of juvenile detention facilities, and this led to the opening of the 'House of Refuge' in New York in 1825 (Omaji, 2003). Around the same time in the UK, the Juvenile Offenders Bill of 1838 proposed that juvenile offenders not be sent to standard prisons, but be protected from the negative influences here by utilising institutions such as the 'asylum' at Parkhurst (Juvenile Offenders Bill, 1838). Sir Robert Peel, then leader of the opposition, asserted the need for young offenders to be 'saved from the contamination of a prison' (Peel, 1838: c.613) but also recognised the risk that it might then be said that they were 'depriving juvenile offenders of the advantages of a jury which older delinquents possessed' (ibid.).

Subsequent Acts of Parliament set in motion what would become known as the 'Welfare Model' (Omaji, 2003). The Prevention of Crime Bill (1908) was intended:

> 'to make better provision for the prevention of crime and for that purpose to provide for the reformation of young offenders' (Pickersgill, 1908: c.221)

and in the same year, the Children Bill (1908) included three new principles to govern the treatment of young offenders. These were:

1. 'that the child offender ought to be kept separate from the adult criminal… that the courts should be agencies for the rescue as well as the punishment of children…
2. that the parent of the child offender must be made to feel more responsible for the wrong-doing of his child. …
3. that the commitment of children in the common gaols…is an unsuitable penalty to impose. The child is made to feel for the rest of his life that he is regarded as a criminal and belongs to the criminal classes…' (Samuel, 1908: cc.1436-7)

The first principle includes the reference to the child's needs and rescuing, clearly stating the welfare issues as needing to be considered alongside the punishment or justice needs. Young people are required to be treated differently to adults. The second principle emphasises the responsibility of the young person's family, demands their attendance in court and identifies the parents as also guilty of an offence against society. Thirdly the labelling of the child as a criminal and the effect on the child's wellbeing and identity is to be avoided by keeping young people out of adult prisons. Each of these principles has relevance to the subject of this study.

Further developed in the Children Act (1933) and the Children & Young Person Act (1969), the welfare model moved towards phasing out sanctions such as detention, attendance centres and borstals, promoted disposing of cases prior to court through liaison between police and social services and recommended a more informal way of dealing with cases by magistrates (Omaji, 2003). The *Children in Trouble* White Paper (Home Office, 1968) stressed the wide range of influences on a young person's behaviour and advocated an approach which protected society while helping the child to grow and mature:

> 'A child's behaviour is influenced by genetic, emotional and intellectual factors, his maturity and his family, school, neighbourhood and wider social setting… The aims of protecting society from juvenile delinquency and of helping children in trouble grow up into mature and law abiding persons are complementary and not contradictory.' (Home Office, 1968: pp.3-4)

Again the influences of the young person's family and environment are emphasised, while the aim of helping the young person is placed alongside protecting society.

In considering the prosecution of children and young people, the concept of *doli incapax* (see Penal Affairs Consortium, 1995) and changes to the related age above which young people are considered criminally responsible have been significant. Children under the age of eight (Children Act, 1933) were *conclusively presumed* to be unable to be guilty of any offence, and this age was raised to ten in the Children & Young Person Act (1963). Additionally, criminal law required the prosecution to prove that a child between the ages of ten and fourteen knew that a crime was seriously wrong in order to be convicted of an offence (Haydon & Scraton, 2000). Another long-standing legal assumption that a boy under 14 was incapable of sexual intercourse or rape was not over-turned in England & Wales law until 1993 (Randall, 1990; Sexual Offences Act, 1993).

The proposals of the Children & Young Person Act (1969) were not fully implemented by the new Conservative Government of 1970 and so the age of criminal responsibility was not raised to fourteen as had been proposed, leaving it one of the lowest in Europe. Muncie (2009) argues that the traditional principles of punitive justice remained, with simply additions of more welfare elements being available most frequently for girls and younger adolescents.

The welfare model came under much scrutiny in the USA following the case in Arizona of Gerald Gault, a 15 year old male who was accused in 1964 of making a lewd telephone call and committed to the State Industrial School for Boys until his 21st birthday (In Re Gault 387, US, 1, 1967). An adult found guilty of a similar offence could have received a maximum fine of $50 and two months imprisonment. Gault's lawyer was unable to appeal the case since this was not permitted for juveniles, but filed a writ of habeas corpus which was eventually considered by the US Supreme Court. The US Supreme Court judged that 'due process', which had been denied Gault as a juvenile should be followed in all cases. In concluding that Gault had been punished, not helped by the remand into an institution, a significant shift began away from 'welfare' and towards 'justice' in both the USA and the western world (Omaji, 2003).

The critique of welfare in the UK is described by Muncie (2009) as having three main elements, coming from both the right and left of the political spectrum. He summarises how the right complained that the system had become too soft on crime, radical social workers complained about disproportionate restrictions on liberty by the need for 'treatment' while civil libertarians and liberal lawyers argued for the restoration of 'due process' and the need for full legal rights. In the 1970s a confusing combination of welfare and justice approaches led to significant increases in sentencing with tougher judicial responses and a drawing in of younger children into the net of youth justice (Muncie, 2009). Ironically, preventative work by social workers led to children being sent to institutions at a younger age. Around this time research was also suggesting the futility of intervention with offenders and a summary that 'nothing works' argued in the UK by Clarke & Sinclair (1974) and in the USA by Martinson (1974).

In the 1980s in the UK, Thatcherism combined efforts to dispense tough justice with reducing costs, leading to an approach of 'bifurcation' (Bottoms, 1977; Pickford, 2000) where more serious crimes by a small group of dangerous offenders were tackled very differently to the majority of more minor offences by the less worrisome majority. The importance of due process, as stressed in the Gault case was underlined in the Criminal Justice Act of 1991, and a more equitable system required a focus on the specific offence rather than the broader concerns around the offender such as previous convictions. Commitments to minimum involvement led to the increased use of cautioning and the development of diversion strategies as demonstrated by the Juvenile Liaison Bureaux (Smith, 2007) and these in turn led to reductions in official offending rates. At the same time, serious offences were dealt with by a clearer rationale in 'Intermediate Treatment' to focus on offending behaviour rather than welfare needs and to use stricter requirements such as frequent attendance and monitoring to present a viable alternative to custody (ibid.).

In the 1990s, efforts by both the Labour and Conservative Parties to be seen to be tough on crime led to some back-tracking on the relatively effective policies of reducing detention and increasing diversionary measures. More secure places for younger people

were provided by the creation of Secure Training Centres and the use of cautioning was reduced by the stopping of repeat cautions. Increased sentences for 10-13 year olds were introduced in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994), arguably partly in response to the killing of James Bulger by two boys aged 10 and 11 in 1993. Smith (2007) also points out the announcement of the introduction of American style 'boot camps' by Home Secretary Michael Howard in 1995, 'despite the absence of any evidence to support their efficacy' (Smith, 2007: p.27).

A movement towards effective practice was part of the recommendations of the Audit Commission's *Misspent Youth* report (1996), which concluded 'The current system for dealing with youth crime is inefficient and expensive, while little is done to deal effectively with juvenile nuisance' (Audit Commission, 1996: p.96). An overhaul of the Youth Justice system, enacted by the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) of the new Labour Government led to the creation of multi-agency Youth Offending Teams and a new policy attitude of 'zero tolerance' towards anti-social behaviour (Newburn, 2002). Additionally this Act saw the removal of the possibility of *doli incapax* for children aged between 10 and 14, judging that all children over ten are criminally responsible (Haydon & Scraton, 2000).

New Referral Orders introduced in this Act are designed to involve a more restorative approach to justice by using a panel of community members to oversee first time offenders; however, this 'alternative justice model' is in contrast to the majority of youth disposals (Smith, 2007). It should be noted that devolution in Wales led to the adoption of the *All Wales Youth Offending Strategy* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a) which includes a stronger 'children first … offenders second' (p.3) and welfare emphasis. An increase in corporatism can be seen in the prescribed *National Standards for Youth Justice Services* (YJB, 2010c) and mandated use of structured tools such as the Asset assessment framework (Smith, 2007). Some more preventative work can also be seen as part of being 'tough on the causes of crime' (see Blair, 1993) and this included the setting up of national interventions such as Sure Start for all young children as well as summer holiday activities for young people considered most at risk of offending.

The historical swings between emphases of welfare and justice are examined in depth by Smith (2005). He identifies the repeated statements by Governments over the last forty years that there is not a conflict between promoting the welfare of young people and protecting society from offending. However, this is clearly a challenge facing Youth Offending Teams and other connected professionals. The stated principal aim of 'preventing reoffending' of the Youth Justice system, reinforced by the Home Office (2003b) has led to some alarm about the movement away from welfare considerations (Nacro, 2003; Family Rights Group et al., 2003; Justice, 2003). As he seeks a positive way forward, Smith (2007) identifies themes of rights, not justice; problem-solving; voluntarism; minimum (state) intervention; and inclusion. He proposes 'an intervention strategy that is based on dealing with young people holistically' (Smith, 2007: p.227), which looks at causes of behaviour and reasserts welfare principles. He writes:

> 'This is not about criminalising young people who offend, but addressing the problems associated with their crimes, both individual and social, in order to find mutually beneficial ways forward' (ibid.: p.228).

Examples of more holistic models in working with young people who have offended include Multi-Systemic Therapy (which will be described in detail in a later section) and 'Wraparound', (see Pullmann et al., 2006). More than simply 'methods', these approaches use a range of methods to help young people within a more ecological or systemic context. However, Smith (2007) is describing another level again: an over-arching, strategic level and these different levels of holistic influence will be seen throughout this study.

Responses to child sexual abuse

Instances of what would now be termed child sexual abuse are known from ancient Greece (around 700BC) although the frequency of these is debated (Corby, 2006). Formal responses to the abuse of children were institutionalised in Britain in the late nineteenth century with the formation of area-based pre-runners to the NSPCC including the London SPCC in 1884. Behlmer (1982 in Corby, 2006) wrote that in its first year the London SPCC:

> 'dealt with 95 cases involving 'domestic victims' of which 12 concerned 'an evil which is altogether too unmentionable' (sexual assault or incest)' (Corby, 2006: p.27).

Corby asserts however, that in contrast to publicising physical abuse and neglect, the NSPCC chose to remain silent while working with victims of child sexual abuse, acquiescing to the public desire for ignorance on this issue. Social awareness of child sexual abuse as a phenomenon is generally dated to the 1960s (Masson, 2004) or 1970s (Finkelhor, 1986). Finkelhor's classic text, *A Sourcebook on Child Sexual Abuse* (ibid.) states: 'It was not until the mid-1970s that child sexual abuse first began to appear on the agenda of mental health and child welfare professionals' (ibid.: p.10).

Formal processes for protecting children following allegations of child abuse were developed in the UK following the inquiry into the death of Maria Colwell (DHSS, 1974). Maria spent most of her early childhood with her aunt after being removed from her mother and step-father following neglect. At the age of six she was returned against her will to her mother and step-father, with a plan of rehabilitation and supervision. Despite the involvement of many health and welfare workers Maria suffered severe further neglect over thirteen months before she died, seriously under-nourished and beaten to death by her step-father. Corby points out how these workers 'failed to 'see' the neglect and ill-treatment' (Corby, 2006: p.38). Even while learning lessons of general child abuse from this and other child death inquiries, and passing advice and circulars, further oversights were being made. The DHSS (1980) circular, *Child Abuse: Central Register Systems* defined four categories of abuse or risk of abuse, but significantly did not mention sexual abuse (Corby, 2006).

Child sexual abuse was firmly brought into the UK public consciousness following the inquiry into the Cleveland Affair of 1987 (Butler-Sloss, 1988). A sudden and dramatic increase in the number of children taken into care in Cleveland followed concerns of sexual abuse. The inquiry questioned the validity of the new anal reflex dilation test used by two paediatricians and found that social services had acted overzealously in removing children from their parents without other evidence. However, the investigator Butler-Sloss stressed that child sexual abuse must remain on the social policy agenda.

The report criticised medical and social work practitioners for over-reacting to disputable evidence of abuse and insisted on better consideration of the rights of parents and the responsibility of medical, police and social work professionals to co-operate more effectively.

The Children Act (1989) begins firmly with the assertion that the child's welfare is of paramount importance. In Section 17, before outlining other services which should be offered to families, the secondary major aim is to support families to care for their own children unless the child's primary welfare needs overrule this. In Section 31, 'harm' is defined as including ill-treatment which 'includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical' (Children Act, 1989: s.31.10). Later Section 47 sets out the Local Authority's duty to investigate what action they need to take to safeguard or promote the welfare of any child in their area who is suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm'. More recent research into the 'significant harm' caused by sexual abuse includes immediate and longer term outcomes including increased risk of combined depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse (Kilpatrick et al., 2003).

Further cases of concerns into ritual abuse and institutional abuse were frequent in the 1990s, and led to more criticism of social worker interventions. New guidelines were issued including *Working Together Under the Children Act 1989* (DH, 1991a) following on from the Cleveland report and some of the earlier ritual abuse cases (Corby, 2006). An uncovering of widespread sexual abuse in Children's homes in North Wales, as well as inflat ed public and media concerns about paedophiles (Soothill et al., 1998) following widely reported child murders influenced new legislation aimed at registering and monitoring sex offenders (Sex Offenders Act, 1997; Crime and Disorder Act, 1998). The focus had moved very much to abuse of children outside their family setting.

A shift in the later 1990s, following an Audit Commission report (1994) and a focus on research (DH, 1995a) led to an increased concern regarding children who were at risk of neglect and wider family problems. The new Labour Government supported the development of a more generalised *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need*

and their Families (DH, 2000) and a tackling of child poverty (Corby, 2006). Jack (2001) argued that the preoccupation with high profile child abuse deaths had led to a culture which investigated and surveyed the few rather than promoting a more ecological perspective which took account of the environmental influences of poverty and inequality, social support and social capital and societal and cultural factors. More national services supporting all children and young people including Sure Start and Connexions were set up to reach goals stated in the important Government Green paper, *Every Child Matters* (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003). Additionally, this Green Paper responded to further serious child abuse cases within families including that of Victoria Climbié who died in 2000 following severe neglect, hypothermia and beatings. The inquiry into Victoria's death was chaired by Lord Laming (2003) and featured widespread criticism of failings within child protection work at all levels and across a range of agencies including central Government (Corby, 2006). New procedures and frameworks to 'safeguard' children were made law in the Children Act (2004). In Wales the *Children and Young People: Rights to Action* paper (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004b) included similar references to safeguarding children and learning from the Climbié Inquiry.

Summarising these developments from the last twenty years, Corby (2006) highlights the recognition of the need for better partnership and involvement of parents and children, a phase of emphasis on extra-familial sexual abuse focusing on the 'dangerous paedophile' and a new commitment to universal children's services which aim to address goals of reducing child poverty, youth crime and teenage pregnancy. He concludes:

> 'A major shift has taken place towards an approach that looks more holistically at child abuse and neglect within the family and is now also much more attuned to the problems of child abuse outside the family.' (ibid.: p.74).

New *Working Together to Safeguard Children* reports (HM Government 2006; 2010) have set out principles to guide all work which safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and young people. These state that this work should be:

- Child centred…
- Rooted in child development…
- Focused on outcomes for children…
- Holistic in approach…

- Ensuring equality of opportunity…
- Involving children and families…
- Building on strengths as well as identifying difficulties…
- Integrated in approach…
- A continuing process not an event…
- Providing and reviewing services…
- Informed by evidence (HM Government, 2010: pp.133-136).

All of these themes will be addressed further throughout this study.

A more universal, preventative approach is not without its critics who have raised concerns about the dangers of failing to allocate sufficient resources to tackle serious abuse cases (NSPCC, 1999; Bridge Child Care Consultancy Service, 1998). However, the overall aims of prevention: reducing the need for treatment and seeking better care for all children are hard to challenge.

The new coalition Government in 2010 commissioned a further review of Child Protection from Eileen Munro of the London School of Economics (Loughton, 2010a). Munro has previously published outlining the benefits of taking a 'systems approach' to child protection which emphasises the *whole* context or system rather than allowing blame to be placed solely on human error (Munro, 2005). Taking the case of Victoria Climbié as an example, Munro suggests that the Laming inquiry (2003) concludes by blaming a raft of individuals and requiring more procedures and monitoring rather than asking why similar solutions have not previously been effective. Rather than sacking the key social worker involved, Munro points to systemic problems of inexperienced and over-worked staff receiving negligible supervision. It seems likely that the Munro Review may take a similar approach proposing a more systemic approach to the whole issue of child protection.

Responses to those who have sexually offended against children

Treatment for adult sex offenders as it developed in the 1960s and 1970s comprised behaviourally based treatments focusing on arousal and feminist influenced issues of power, control and stereotyping (McAlinden, 2007). These behavioural treatments typically included aversive conditioning using chemical, olfactory or electrical

treatments to unwanted arousal (Langevin & Lang, 1985) as well as other efforts to change behaviour by monitoring, measuring, punishing and reinforcement of the desired behaviour. Perkins (1991) suggests a combination of these behavioural treatments with interventions addressing criminogenic needs.

Finkelhor's (1986) review of theories of sexual offending against children moved away from early single-factor theories that sexual offending is perpetrated by those who have been victims of sexual offending, citing the lack of supporting evidence for these theories. He proposed a four-factor model of motivation:

(I) Emotional congruence
(II) Sexual arousal
(III) Blockage
(IV) Disinhibition (pp.128-9)

In terms of treatment, Finkelhor was cautious about any findings that did not show effects on the key issue of recidivism, and recommended significant further research. He also reviewed some early mentions of inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual aggression from children and adolescents. Over twenty years later, Finkelhor's model is still influential in the field of understanding sexual offending against children. More recent models such as the Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending (ITSO) (Ward & Beech, 2006) combine understanding of aspects of neuropsychology which lead to clinical symptoms similar to Finkelhor's factors. Following sexual offending, ecological elements namely social, cultural and physical environment and personal circumstances contribute to social learning which may lead to further offending in the same way that these influenced the neuropsychology prior to offending.

As part of the bifurcation in the Criminal Justice Act (1991), sexual offences were considered among the serious cases requiring public protection and led to longer than previous prison sentences (McAlinden, 2007). The development of structured, actuarial risk assessment tools in the 1990s was undertaken to predict reoffending, including by adults who had sexually offended (Cobley, 2005). Further measures in responding to sexual offences included sex offender registration (Sex Offenders Act, 1997) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) (Criminal Justice & Court Services

Act, 2000: s.67, expanded in Criminal Justice Act, 2003: s.325). The Criminal Justice Act (2003) introduced a new sentencing framework including 'custody plus' which gives the option of the addition of a post-custody period 'on license' as well as an indeterminate preventative sentence for those considered to pose too great a risk to the public to be released (Criminal Justice Act, 2003: s.225.4).

Structured Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (see Kemshall, 2008) were developed through the 1990s using mainly cognitive behavioural methods and these form standard practice today in UK prisons and community-based probation services. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) involves the client and therapist investigating links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour (British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies, 2005). Work is structured, goal-focused and often involves the identification of cognitive distortions or thinking errors, such as the false idea that a child initiated or wanted sexual contact (e.g. Ward et al., 1997). Relapse Prevention began as a model of cognitive behavioural change maintenance within treatment of addictions (Marlatt & George, 1984), which focused on teaching skills to anticipate and avoid relapse into unwanted behaviour. It was developed by Pithers et al. (1983) to explain how a sexual offender relapses and was adopted as a treatment model. A contrasting Self-regulation Model was developed by Ward et al. (1998) which identified different pathways to sexual offending but still relied on cognitive behavioural methods.

A further significant development in responses to adults who have sexually offended is the use of Restorative Justice approaches. Restorative Justice aims to repair harm by voluntary participation of the victim and the offender in processes which acknowledge harm done and provide for reparation or amends to be made (Restorative Justice Consortium, 2004). McAlinden (2005, 2007) makes strong arguments for the exploration of restorative approaches with sexual offenders 'for improving the safety of victims, for providing relief for communities and for rehabilitating offenders' (McAlinden, 2005: p.388) although she is realistic about the need for caution, also reflected in the guidance for sensitive or complex cases from the Criminal Justice System (2004). Circles of Support and Accountability (Wilson, 2003) are a promising example of restorative practice that has spread from Canada to the UK (Kemshall, 2008). Another significant

contribution from outside the UK & USA is Jenkins' (1990) *Invitations to Responsibility* which promotes more engagement of adult and young perpetrators of abuse within the family and wider context; while Lewis (1999) collected a range of culturally aware and often creative approaches with sexual abusers from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Along with restorative justice, another key principle gaining attention in the field of adult probation is desistance (Farrall & Calverley, 2006). Here, research focuses on what factors lead individuals to cease offending, and this can be seen as taking a more holistic view incorporating strengths and protective factors. Research into desistance by adult sexual offenders (Kruttschnitt et al., 2000; Brogden & Harkin, 2000) identified the benefits of stable employment and informal community monitoring in increasing desistance.

Initial responses to young people who have sexually harmed, or juvenile sex offenders tended to follow the more established adult models (Ryan & Lane, 1997); however, developments within the field have led to a growing acceptance that these young people are not simply 'mini adult sex offenders' (Hackett et al., 2003: p.14). Instead, as children and adolescents who are still developing, an approach that acknowledges their particular identities and needs is seen as more appropriate and effective. In fact, some of the most recent research into adult treatment models includes influence from programmes developed with young people (Hanson et al., 2009).

Cortoni (2009) criticises relapse prevention models and self-regulation models as lacking in evidence and focusing on the offence process rather than rehabilitation. Instead she advocates a combination of two later models, Risk-Needs-Responsivity and the Good Lives Model, echoing Hanson's (2009; Hanson et al., 2009) findings that Risk-Needs-Responsivity is the most demonstrably effective method of reducing recidivism amongst sex offenders. Risk-Need-Responsivity (Andrews & Dowden, 2007) is a rehabilitation model based on a social-psychological theory of criminal behaviour. The three key words in the title indicate the importance placed on giving more service to people at more *Risk,* responding to criminogenic *Need* and maximising *Responsivity* or effectiveness by using methods with a strong evidence base while being tailored to the

individual. The Good Lives Model (Ward & Stewart, 2003) is a strengths based rehabilitation model which focuses on the primary needs or 'human goods' which offenders have sought to meet in inappropriate ways; for example, the positive goals of intimate friendship, mastery and autonomy may have wrongly been met by sexual activity with a child. The Good Lives Model has been used with young people and will be described further later as an example of a holistic approach.

Young people who have sexually harmed

Introduction, history and policy

The recognition that young people who have sexually harmed are a heterogeneous group has been a vital step in discussing and devising appropriate responses (Hackett, 2007). Presentation of a continuum of sexual behaviour from normal/normative behaviour, through non-normative/inappropriate/concerning behaviour requiring a response or correction and on to harmful, abusive and illegal behaviour has been an important contribution to the field (see Ryan, 2000; Araji, 2004; Bancroft, 2006; Hackett & Taylor, 2008). The wide spectrum of behaviours requiring intervention could range from the inappropriate touching of someone's bottom by an eight year old to a planned and violent rape by a seventeen year old, clearly requiring very different responses. Legally the former behaviour would not constitute an offence since the child is under ten. Prosecuting the child, even aged ten or over, would be unlikely to be considered in the public interest by Police, although it might lead to a referral to a Children & Families Social Work team. In contrast, a planned and violent rape by a seventeen year old could be punished by a significant term in a Young Offenders Institution and later prison, possibly subject to extension if the young person was determined to pose unacceptable risk to the public on release (Criminal Justice Act, 2003) as well as inclusion on the Sex Offenders Register.

Some of the literature clearly addresses behaviour either by younger children, who may be described as 'sexually aggressive children', 'displaying inappropriate sexualised

behaviour' or 'having sexual behaviour problems' (e.g. Araji, 1997; Johnson & Doonan, 2005; Chaffin et al., 2008), or by older adolescents who may be termed 'juvenile sex offenders' (e.g. Carpentier et al., 2005; Chaffin 2008). Since no hard and fast boundary between the two exists, this study will not repeatedly emphasise these differences, but the overall varying needs of children and young people by age, maturity and life experiences should be self-evident. Increasing reference is also made in the literature to different subtypes of young people who sexually abuse (Epps & Fisher, 2004; Hunter et al., 2003; Parks, 2007). Future research may separate out particular treatment needs for specific sub-groups of young people but this review will comprise more general findings.

Early mentions of young people who have sexually abused or harmed are included in Finkelhor (1986) who cites Finch (1967) and others' references to inappropriate sexual play and aggression, and links to victimisation. Calder (2001) mentions a growth of literature reviews of evidence for work with young people who have sexually abused in the 1990s and considers theories of why young people sexually abuse, drawing particularly on Finkelhor (1986). Calder examines cognitive-behavioural models of treatment and suggests that an ecological perspective could be a useful way forward (Bischof & Rosen, 1998). Chaffin et al. (2002) summarising work with 'Juvenile Sex Offenders' in the USA stress the absence of research before 1980, increasing from the late 1980s to more than 35 new articles per year in PsycInfo in 2002. These figures have continued to increase steadily with 48 new articles in the same database in 2009 (searching abstracts for juvenile OR adolescent, plus heading Sex Offenses). For this research similar searches were conducted using PsycInfo, Medline, Academic Search Premier and the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences. However, much of the current literature in the UK is located in book chapters which are not always included in these databases, so additional snowballing searches were conducted using reference lists.

Legal and policy reactions to the recognition of young people who have sexually harmed as a group of concern include mentions in the Children Act (1989) and subsequent *Working Together* documentation (DH, 1991a, DH et al., 1999). The National Children's Home (1992) report broke new ground explaining how around a third of all child sexual abuse was committed by young people but stating how agency responses were

uncoordinated with sporadic and inadequate services. This report was prepared by a Committee who investigated the issue of young people who had sexually abused, including contributions from Bentovim and Vizard who had previously delivered key conference papers published in Hollows (1991). Recommendations from the report included the assertion that:

> 'an overall, systemic approach should be developed for dealing with cases (alleged or otherwise) where a child or young person has abused another child' (NCH, 1992: p.47).

Further recommendations that courts receive a thorough assessment of background to the behaviour prior to sentencing, that intensive treatment is delivered to all young people who have sexually harmed who are in custody and that Government departments establish national information sharing and guidelines for good practice are debatably still pending nearly twenty years on, as will be explored later.

In the same way that reviews and investigations into serious individual cases have tended to drive policy in other areas of child protection, the case of DM, an 18 year old who attacked and killed an 11 year old boy in 1998 has been influential in the consideration of young people who commit serious sexual offences (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001; Jeyarajah Dent & Jowitt, 2003). DM had been 14 years old when he was convicted of 12 charges of sexual abuse against a number of children. He was made subject of a three year criminal supervision order with a requirement to receive treatment for his sexually abusive behaviour. Nine months after leaving the specialist unit where he had been treated, DM committed the murder of an 11 year old boy. One of the recommendations of the subsequent Part 8 review was the implementation of a National Strategy for the management and treatment of children and young people who commit serious sexual offences (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001). The lack of a necessary national strategy had also been stressed by a Probation Inspectorate Report (Home Office, 1998) and in a chapter by Morrison (1999) entitled 'Is There A Strategy Out There?'.

Discussion in Parliament regarding DM's case (Smith, 2001) referred to Effective Practice strategies being developed by the Youth Justice Board (YJB, 2002) and piloting

community projects which included the Evaluation of the AIM Assessment (Griffin & Beech, 2004). Additional reference was made to further liaison between the Department of Health and the Home Office which led to the joint Department of Health and Home Office conference on Young People who Sexually Abuse which was held in Autumn 2003 and is reported in (DH/ Home Office, 2006). The lack of progress following the NCH Report (NCH, 1992) was also criticised by Lovell (2002) writing for the NSPCC.

One of the presentations at the October 2003 conference was delivered by Hackett & Masson (2003) and their subsequent report (Hackett et al., 2003) is widely cited within the report (DH/ Home Office, 2006). This Delphi study provided a wide view of opinion from practitioners, managers, analysis of service provision, secure residential providers and policy documents and a smaller sample of young people and parents. The *Needs and Effective Treatment of Young People who Sexually Abuse* report (DH/ Home Office, 2006) was due to be followed by the launch of a National Strategy for Young People who Sexually Abuse later in 2006 (Blair, 2006).

This National Strategy was expected to be launched at a conference in November 2009 but was again delayed, with only a brief mention of young people who have sexually harmed being made in the *Healthy Children, Safer Communities* (DH et al., 2009) report. The updated *Working Together* document (HM Government, 2010) gives the clearest recommendations yet about the need for co-ordination between Local Child Safeguarding Boards and YOTs and the 'likely' need for a multi-agency approach even in cases where the 'young abuser' is not considered personally at risk of continuing significant harm (ibid.: p.304). It also promotes the new 'framework' due in 'early 2010' (ibid.: p.303). Recent estimates suggested that a strategy or framework for young people who have sexually harmed might be delivered in Summer 2010 (Hope, 2010) but the change of Government in May 2010 is likely to add further delays and changes. The need for policy change to reflect the improved understanding of the needs and risks posed by these young people has also been identified in the U.S.A. by Chaffin (2008), who argues that key misconceptions about young people who have sexually harmed are pervasive within policy and practice as well as more general public opinion.

Recognition & assessment of young people who have sexually harmed

Responses to young people who have sexually harmed can be divided into stages, from recognition through assessment to intervention/treatment. The recognition of an incident or more of sexual harm will usually involve investigation by police and/or social services. Child protection guidelines direct professionals in schools and other settings who suspect harm of a child to make a referral to social services or police. Family members may contact police or social services when an incident is discovered or suspected. Calls may be made to helplines such as those run by the NSPCC and Childline by family members, victims or their families or by the young person who has sexual harmed.

Assessment of a young person alleged to have sexually harmed will progress informally and formally as professionals become involved. Police interviews and decisions about prosecution and further action may be conducted with liaison with other professionals but this is not always the case. Assessment of the young person by social services as a child protection matter is no longer mandatory (DH, 1998; DH et al., 1999) and timescales between arrest and disposal required by the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) restrict the involvement of others and shared assessment procedures previously favoured in Greater Manchester for example (Calder, 2002). Initial decisions need to be made regarding risks to people around the young person, whether the young person can remain living in the same place and what contact they should have with other family members or children (Calder, 2001). Calder states how further assessment will consider these matters in more depth as well as considering future risk and recidivism but he also introduces the AIM framework which uses terminology of 'concerns' and 'strengths' rather than risk. Hackett et al. (2003) found that just over 30% of YOTs used the AIM model to assess young people who had sexually harmed while nearly 60% of other services used AIM.

Further assessment will always take place after a young person is charged with an offence as a youth offending team worker is required to complete Asset forms (YJB, 2006) and a pre-sentence report within a specified timeframe. Further direction from courts may

lead to additional assessment by external professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists or other recognised experts in the field of sexual harm. If a young person is not charged with an offence but still considered to be of concern to local social services they will be assessed using the Common Assessment Framework process (CWDC, 2010a) and perhaps referred on a voluntary basis to other specialist teams such as those run by the NSPCC or Barnardo's, where they will again almost invariably be assessed using the AIM framework or items such as the Child Sexual Behaviour Checklist (Johnson, 1998) or ERASOR (Worling, 2005).

The purpose of all this assessment will vary according to the statutory nature of some instruments and the ideology inherent in other tools, individual assessors or organisations. Youth Offending Team tools have explicit aims in assessing risk of reoffending (Asset), risk of serious harm (ROSH) as well as guiding sentencing and intervention work. The AIM (and AIM2) assessment framework guides collection of data across four domains to create management and therapeutic plans based on the needs and strengths of the individual (Morrison & Henniker, 2006). MEGA (Rasmussen & Miccio-Fonseca, 2007) uses a similar ecological approach to reveal risks and needs. Other assessment tools such as J-SOAP-II (Prentky et al., 2009) also explicitly seek an assessment of 'risk' (Prescott, 2007) and describe themselves as empirically guided since until recently, no validated actuarial instruments for assessing risk of sexual harm by juveniles have existed (Parks, 2007, Viljoen et al., 2009). A new instrument, JSORRAT-II (Epperson et al., 2006) has been described by Rich as 'presently the only actuarial assessment instrument for adolescent sexual offenders' (Rich, 2009: p.227). However, Epperson (2009) indicates that the tool is only currently validated for youth in Utah and Iowa, with further studies underway in Georgia and California.

Intervention work with young people who have sexually harmed

While some form of on-going assessment is good practice in terms of evaluating progress, moving on to offer some kind of intervention or treatment will generally form the next stage of a response, unless the assessment stage concludes that no further response is necessary. Treatment of young people who have sexually harmed is

advocated for the prevention of future harm to victims as well as for the wellbeing of the young people themselves (Hackett et al., 2003). Studies have suggested that a significant proportion of adult sex offenders first offended as adolescents (Abel et al., 1987; Smallbone & Wortley, 2004), giving a further rationale for intervention with young people to curtail offending, while the young person is still developing and learning. Research into treatment methods with young people who have sexually harmed includes the discussion of methods used in practice, methods considered effective or philosophically desirable by clinicians and methods reporting a more scientifically demonstrated evidence base. Some treatment descriptions imply use by psychiatric or psychology professionals while others are presented as accessible to wider groups of youth justice or social work practitioners. Writing for the International Association for the Treatment of Sexual Offenders, Miner et al. (2006) set out high standards of expertise including a clinical Master's training for anyone undertaking assessments or treatment work with young people who have sexually harmed. It will be seen that many practitioners in the UK rely on specialist training on top of more general social work or youth justice experience and this section will continue by looking at methods which are used in this wider practice.

Early treatment models, based around adult-style cognitive-behavioural and relapse prevention interventions, though criticised, have continued to form a large part of what is offered to young people who have sexually harmed (Bumby & Talbot, 2007, Hackett et al., 2003). It is concerning that a range of punitive, harsh and labelling treatment methods have also continued, despite increasing questions of efficacy and ethicality (Chaffin & Bonner, 1998; Zimring, 2004); although these appear more frequently in the USA where private facilities dominate (Morrison, 2006). Essential components of intervention work identified by UK practitioners in the Delphi study by Hackett et al. (2003) are listed below:

- Emotional competence skills including management of anger and distress
- General developmental assessment
- Changing cognitive distortions about sex and relationships
- Pro-social emotional cognitive and behavioural skills
- Risk assessment
- Gaining an understanding of the child's cycles/ pathways to sexually harmful behaviours

- Sex education
- Life-space work (boundaries, interaction, social skills)
- Relapse prevention work
- Family work
- Consequences of further abusive behaviour
- The development of empathy (p.19)

This list is also reproduced in the Youth Justice Board (2008b) *Key Elements of Effective Practice for Young People who have Sexually Abused*. No guidance is given in this document regarding specific intervention methods beyond requiring that practitioners receive specialist training. This might typically be provided by AIM or G-MAP who co-produce several intervention manuals (AIM, 2010). Practitioners might generally be expected to utilise methods and techniques from a range of sources including training, manuals and collected volumes of practice such as those edited by Calder (1999, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2007). In addition to direct work with the young person, Morrison (2004) emphasises the need for work involving the family and other agencies, stating that:

> 'treatment provision is not enough. Effective management must also include monitoring and supervision.' (p.399)

The edited volume by O'Reilly et al. (2004) divides treatment essentials into 'offence specific' and 'offence related' tasks with additional chapters on relapse prevention and family intervention. Print & O'Callaghan (2004) stress the need for a holistic, developmentally sensitive approach and begin by describing non offence-specific methods for motivating young people to engage in the work. They then describe offence-specific work relating to routes into offending behaviour, promoting empathy, addressing cognitive distortions and problematic sexual interests. Worling (2004) in describing 'offence related' tasks discusses social skills, sex and relationship education, anger and impulse management and prior victimisation, but also begins by mentioning how he works 'in a holistic fashion within a comprehensive treatment programme' (Worling, 2004: p.275).

The importance of intervention work directly addressing harmful sexual behaviour has strong support from practitioners, with the statement:

> 'The aim is to help young people understand and accept responsibility for their behaviour and develop strategies and coping skills to avoid abusing or offending again' (Hackett et al., 2003: p.15)

achieving the highest level of consensus (93%) among practitioners. This was the statement taken by the Department of Health/ Home Office (2006) report to indicate that intervention work should be 'Abuse-specific'. The ambiguity of the terms abuse-specific or offence-specific can be seen when Araji (1997) advocates offence specific work alongside an individually tailored, family systems approach, stressing that:

> 'The nature of the abuse, duration, frequency, relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, type of coercion used, and etiology of the abuse need to be considered when making decisions about treatment.' (p.189)

This kind of offence-specific work – work which is specific to the type and circumstances of the abusive incident, is very different to work which focuses on this incident to the exclusion of other factors, and is clearly compatible with a more holistic approach. Hackett et al. (2003) go on to highlight statements indicating the support for a more holistic approach, and explain:

> 'preventing recidivism was seen as a central goal, but this was seen as achievable only by addressing the wider psycho-social needs of young people; a holistic approach, rather than a narrower offence-focused one.' (p.15)

The desire for work to promote well-being and to suit the young person's individual circumstances including environment and past experiences shows a clear philosophical approach which is important although the effectiveness of this is hard to measure empirically.

Reviews of the evidence for particular treatment methods have repeated the need for more high quality studies in this area and have been able to draw limited conclusions about effectiveness (Vizard et al., 1995; Brooks-Gordon et al., 2005). Some efficacy has been found in traditional cognitive-behavioural programmes (Bumby & Talbot, 2007, Hackett, 2004) but other comparisons between treatment modalities have been inconclusive (Bumby & Talbot, 2007). The measurement of effectiveness of treatment by desistance is problematic since many young people desist from sexual offending without formal intervention (ibid.) or are not identified as reoffending due to low report and

reconviction rates (Wieckowski et al., 2005). Brooks-Gordon et al. (2005) summarise the difficulties of conducting randomised controlled trials with young people within a criminal justice setting, highlighting the obstacles to blind allocation to treatment or comparison groups and the fact that a therapeutic relationship is not reproducible between groups. Unique positive therapist characteristics are also identified as confounding variables by Marshall & Fernandez (2004).

Critiques of cognitive behavioural therapy with this client group include a useful summary by Rich (2003) who describes some advantages of a CBT framework and some helpful language including concepts of thinking errors and sequences of events. However, Rich also cautions that the acquisition of taught concepts and an observed compliance do not necessarily reflect change in behaviour or attitude. Later he expresses doubt that many young people who have sexually harmed are 'ready, willing and able' (Rich, 2003: p.310) to participate in or benefit from cognitive behavioural methods which rely on self-reflection and motivation. The argument for the use of other methods to increase engagement from young people will be seen later in this chapter.

A recent piece of research which claimed to demonstrate the superiority of cognitive behavioural methods requires further examination. Ikomi et al. (2009) consulted treatment providers in a Southwestern state in the USA and reported an exact (84.53%) success percentage for cognitive behavioural methods based on aggregated estimates of effectiveness from providers. The authors' dismissal of multisystemic therapy as not being a treatment approach led them not to publish the corresponding effectiveness estimates for this treatment. A reliance on provider data and bias against certain methods raises questions of validity of this peer-reviewed research.

For young people who are subject to community supervision orders, intervention work will typically be undertaken at the YOT although some teams may have local arrangements with specialist teams who carry out such work. Some young people may receive therapeutic intervention from a CAMHS service. Sheerin (2004) identifies a number of psychiatric disorders which may be common in young people who have sexually harmed and which require psychiatric treatment which may not be available.

More specialised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy may also require delivery from a psychologist.

Young people subject to custodial or secure accommodation requirements may receive intervention work specific to sexual offending within the institution but this is frequently considered inadequate or unsatisfactory (Hackett et al., 2003). Children and young people outside the youth justice system who have sexually harmed may receive intervention from Children's Services or specialist services but this will be subject to local availability and usually on a voluntary basis. The 'patchy' nature of service for young people who have sexually harmed was revealed by the Hackett et al. (2003) Delphi study and repeated by Hackett when interviewed for the BBC (Long, 2010).

In offering intervention or treatment that is specific to the young person's developmental context, appropriate variations in treatment for young people with learning difficulties (O'Callaghan, 1999) or for much younger children (Butler & Elliott, 2006) are recommended. Additionally the question of how far treatment should address the welfare needs of the individual will be apparent from earlier discussion of the contrasting emphases from youth justice and child protection arenas. Restorative approaches have particularly been trialled in cases of sibling abuse (Henniker & Mercer, 2007; Mercer, 2009) and this work is placed within a context of 'a holistic approach' (Henniker & Mercer, 2007: p.231).

Contrasting models of treatment to the cognitive-behavioural and relapse prevention models include the Good Lives model (Collie et al., 2007), Multi-Systemic Therapy (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005) and Longo's (2002) Holistic Approach. All of these include some claim to being 'holistic' or 'ecologically focused' in contrast to putting the main emphasis on offending behaviour which is characterised by cognitive-behavioural and relapse prevention models and which prioritises the 'justice' model as described above. Prescott & Longo (2006) endorse:

> 'the use of a holistic/integrated approach to treating youthful sexual abusers … [which] blends traditional aspects of sexual abuser treatment into a holistic, humanistic and developmentally consistent model for working with youth' (p.55).

We now move on to an investigation of the use of this term 'holistic' in literature regarding working with young people who have sexually harmed in an attempt to identify what it means, how it has risen in prominence and to begin to look at the implications of choosing to work in a 'holistic' way with this client group.

Holistic approaches

Working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed

The importance of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed was agreed by managers involved in Hackett et al.'s (2003) Delphi study. The statement:

> 'The approach to these children and young people should be based on a developmental and holistic philosophy of intervention that addresses nonsexual needs as well as specific sexual risks' (p.28)

received 97% agreement and a median response of 10, indicating the strongest possible agreement. A similarly consistent response was found from the survey of practitioners. What is less clear from this study, and the subsequent report (DH/ Home Office 2006) which has turned these findings into recommendations, is what a 'holistic philosophy of intervention' might look like in practice. Morrison (2006: p.349) avoids giving a 'prescription for holistic methodology' suggesting that 'the very nature of holistic practice cautions against claims of finality or certainty' (ibid.). However, his ideas will be shown to draw together a number of key areas from the literature. The following section will consider holistic approaches from literature regarding work with young people who have sexually harmed, including models described as 'integrated', 'ecological' and 'systemic' which will be seen to be terms used synonymously or in a way that will be suggested to describe part of wider 'holistic' practice.

Early mentions of holistic responses to young people who have sexually harmed are included in a chapter by Hackett et al. (1998) as well as being used by Ryan (1997, 1999) to describe the wider developmental and contextual realities of treatment advocated by the US National Task Force on Juvenile Sexual Offending (1993). The first outright

presenter of a holistic approach to treating young people who have sexually harmed was Longo (2001, 2002), who developed his work with adults and adaptation of the relapse prevention model to include work looking at mind, body, spirit and the emotional self and addressing four universal needs of belonging, generosity, mastery and independence (Brendtro et al., 1990). A more recent summary by Longo (2008) gives his rationale for a holistic approach:

> 'Young people with sexual behaviour problems and sexual aggression behaviours must be looked at from a holistic/ecological perspective as they may be subject to co-morbid diagnosis, traumatic histories that may have neuro-biological impact on the brain and brain development, and learning deficits and disabilities among other concerns' (p.254).

Longo's (2002, 2004) model emphasises how holistic treatment focuses on wellness and healing the whole person. It integrates different models and theories into the process of treatment including knowledge of young people's learning styles, understanding feelings and the importance of a healthy therapeutic relationship. Hunter & Longo (2005) set out how a Relapse Prevention model can be integrated with a more holistic or 'whole person' approach. Longo also advocates the use of experiential therapies delivered by trained and experienced clinicians including 'role plays, drama therapy, art therapy, music therapy, and exercises used to build trust and explore family issues' (Longo, 2002: p.228). The importance of including family work is also acknowledged, as is the addressing of a young person's victim experiences; however, the main emphasis is on seeing the individual young person as a whole. Longo's approach is presented by Calder (2008) as being built on similar premises to the AIM Model (Morrison & Henniker, 2006), emphasising strengths within a broader framework.

In summarising the difficulties with traditional approaches, Collie et al. (2007) state concern that:

> 'risk management rehabilitation fails to provide a holistic theory of sexual offending that is sensitive to the developmental and contextual needs of young people' (p.53)

and they present the Good Lives Model as an alternative theory of rehabilitation, being a strengths-based model. Central to the model is the notion that all human beings act to

meet inherent human needs or 'primary human goods'. While the ten main needs areas are different to the four areas identified by Longo there is some overlap, and the overall impression of focusing on positive attributes and goals for the individual as a whole is similar. Again, ways of incorporating and augmenting other relapse prevention and self-regulation models are presented, but within a 'meaningful and holistic way of making sense of past offending and a future *good life* without offending' (Collie et al., 2007: p.58). The balance of risks and goods is argued to be vital to meet the psychological needs of the young people. In outlining the theoretical basis for the Good Lives Model, Ward & Stewart (2003) draw on identified human needs from psychologists Deci & Ryan (2000) (who emphasise competence, autonomy and relatedness) and Doyal & Gough (1991).

The word 'holistic' here describes the integration of theories, and is also used to describe a thorough, wider understanding of human behaviour as well as an overall theoretical approach. Some mention is made of the adolescents' ecological contexts, but in contrast to other models which will be presented, the focus is again very much on the whole individual young person. Similarly, Rich's (2003) Integrated Model combines theories of cognitive behavioural therapy and psychodynamic approaches but focuses more on seeing the whole individual client rather than emphasising their wider context.

Another way of seeing the fuller context of the young person is using the dual approach proposed by Bannister (1998) where she describes therapy addressing both the child's harmful sexual behaviour and own victim experiences, instead of using two therapists which might reinforce the 'splitting' in their own behaviour. The other dual aspect of the approach is identified in the deep involvement of the child's carer who helps the child in stopping the 'steps to abuse' and may jointly work with the therapist in providing sex education and building the child's self-esteem. Bannister also mentions the effective use of creative techniques including art work, physical and vocal expression and story making.

In the same volume, early work by Hackett et al. (1998) defines a holistic framework for sibling abuse work which brings together three strands of healing the victim, healing the 'young abuser' and healing the family. The primary importance of work with the victim

is placed centrally, and this is offered by a separate but connected worker to the therapist working with the young person who has sexually harmed. Hackett et al. suggest that work with the family has been over time perhaps 'the weakest part of practice in the field' (ibid.: p.169) and discuss the challenges in addressing concepts of acknowledgement, responsibility and accountability within the family as well as questions regarding reconciliation.

The chapter talks about the family putting in place a holistic protection plan, as well as using holistic to describe the intervention response and framework. Here the family context is the primary concern, partly since the victim, 'abuser' and carers are all from the same family but this is what drives the holistic part of the model. Additionally a philosophical stance founded on support and understanding the need for the 'abuser' to also heal from the experience is very much in contrast to more offence focused treatment methods. Bentovim (1991) also briefly mentions young people as perpetrators within a family system of sexual abuse, expanded in Bentovim (1998: p.119) where he proposes a 'Family systemic approach to work with young sex offenders' using family therapy methods. Systemic is another word frequently used in describing holistic practice. It is used to describe any approach which recognises the wider systems surrounding a young person, including family, peers and the wider community. One specific type of systemic approach which works exclusively through family participation is Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST).

Multi-Systemic Therapy is outlined for use with young people who have sexually harmed by Letourneau & Swenson (2005). While not explicitly using the word holistic, the ecological framework in which they present the young person as embedded can be seen as another approach with a holistic emphasis, seeing the whole context. Ecological approaches including MST have roots in theories from Bronfenbrenner (1977) where a young person is considered within nested systems which can be presented as widening concentric circles ranging from family to the macro society. In MST, the main treatment modality is intensive home-based therapist support to a young person's caregivers to deliver structured exercises targeting agreed goals, and the emphasis is on building strengths and protective factors within the systems where a young person is living. This

contrasts with approaches which require the removal of a young person to an external placement where they are treated with other young people which is argued to be iatrogenic, that is, actually increasing negative behaviour.

In contrast to Longo's (2002) model, Multi-Systemic Therapy does not prioritise the therapeutic relationship between the therapist/worker and the young person:

> 'the MST model assumes that the relationship between therapist and child is neither necessary nor sufficient to obtain favourable clinical outcomes. Although therapists should have a good working relationship with the child, the primary relationship for the therapist is with the caregiver(s) who is the manager of the child's ecology and exerts the greatest amount of influence (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005: p.256)'.

Another key difference between Multi-Systemic Therapy and the holistic models described so far is the insistence on the use of interventions that have empirical support 'such as the cognitive-behavioural therapies, behaviour therapies, pragmatic family therapies, and certain pharmacological interventions (e.g. for attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder)' (ibid.: p.260). The authors are keen to demonstrate the effectiveness of MST as a treatment in randomised controlled trials and this rigorous testing requires strong treatment fidelity and quality assurance.

Looking at a young person's wider family and environment are two of the domains of the AIM model, another approach which is described as holistic. While AIM stands for Assessment, Intervention and Moving On, early priorities of the project have been the setting up of inter-agency policies, procedures and networks and the development of initial and comprehensive assessment tools (Morrison & Henniker, 2006). The assessment tools require information gathering across four domains: the developmental, family/ carers and environment, deliberately following the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (DH, 2000), and an additional domain of 'Offence Specific'. Evidence is gathered to demonstrate concerns and strengths in each of these domains, using criteria of available research informed indicators of risk and others based on a consensus of clinical judgement. Different tools are provided to assess children under ten, families and young people with learning difficulties.

Less was initially written by the AIM team about interventions with young people who have sexually harmed, although the AIM Outcome Matrix (Morrison & Henniker, 2006: p.40) suggests appropriate levels and sources of intervention depending on the assessment of concerns and strengths. AIM developed a series of intervention manuals in conjunction with the Manchester based G-MAP project (AIM, 2010). Further developments by the project planned to focus more on the needs of victims, particularly in sibling work which echoes the earlier work mentioned by Hackett et al. (1998). The other key emphasis from the AIM model is the importance of interagency and multi-agency procedures, partnership, involvement and training, within an overall holistic philosophy:

> 'The strong holistic philosophy underpinning the AIM approach, for example, the use of the terms 'strengths and concerns' as core constructs, was also powerful in gaining practitioner support and enthusiasm. It seemed that for some practitioners this represented a rekindling of lost or submerged professional ideals' (Morrison & Henniker, 2006: p.47).

This over-arching holistic philosophy is similar to that in the Good Lives model above, with an emphasis on strengths which is common to the AIM approach, the Good Lives model and Multi-Systemic Therapy. The benefits of framing goals positively and utilising and building up pre-existing strengths, protective factors and resilience are key to a number of strengths based approaches which have become popular in social work (Saleebey, 1996; Powell et al., 1997) and have also had some influence in youth justice (Clark, 1996, Corcoran, 1997). Some of these cite roots in Solution Focused Therapy (de Shazer, 1988) but the breadth of 'strength based' approaches well outstrips this possible beginning. However, none of these models focus on strengths to the extent of excluding concerns, needs or risks, but instead seek balance within a holistic context.

A further model for consideration of holistic work with young people who have sexually harmed is proposed by Durham (2006). His framework considers the widest social context of any, moving from the individual through the family out to a political and social context and including organisational principles such as gender and sexuality as well as emphasising power relationships and language. Durham seeks to offer a holistic view of 'why we have sexual abuse in our society and why it is mainly committed by

males' (ibid.: p.22), as well as going on to propose a 'holistic and flexible practice intervention schedule' (ibid.). In practice, it appears that Durham's work, while mentioning assessment work and safety plans with families and other agencies, mainly focuses on therapeutic work with the young person in light of social systems rather than seeking to challenge the social systems.

These different holistic models can be represented as segments of a holistic spectrum, below, with the main axis from left to right varying with whether the focus of the work is on all aspects of an individual or a wider emphasis on society. For clarity the extremes at each end of the spectrum are also pictured but these do not fall within the holistic spectrum. An earlier version of this diagram was included in the researcher's Master's research (Hall, 2007). The authors and theories chosen are indicative of the breadth of emphases rather than claiming to present an exhaustive picture of holistic practice.

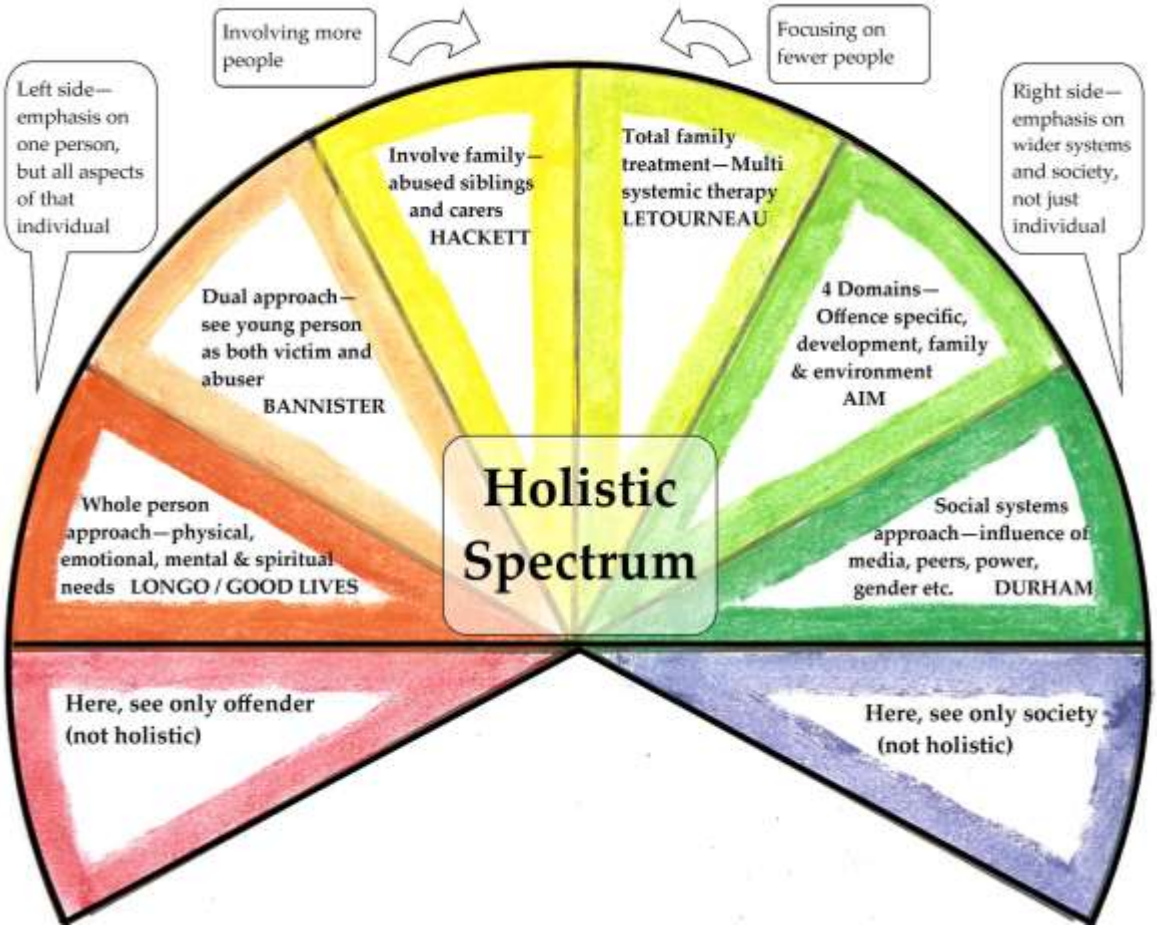

Figure 1. Spectrum of Holistic Theories for Work with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

Both ends of this holistic spectrum can be seen in a definition from Rich:

> 'Treating the whole child means treating different aspects of the pathology presented by the juvenile in treatment, but it also means recognizing the array of forces at play in the lives of each individual child or adolescent.' (Rich, 2003: p.449)

His chapter on 'Treating the Whole Child in a Whole-Minded Manner' seeks to incorporate approaches from public health, criminology, mental health, personal competency, social environment and social psychology. Another broader approach to working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed can be seen in the article by Bentovim (1998) where he describes 'systemic' work. Bentovim's definition of systems thinking includes three different issues:

- A philosophy of observation which includes the context as well as the object of concern.
- An approach to treating problems in context which includes families and those concerned with them.
- A number of methods of treatment. (p.120)

These issues from a family therapy perspective include seeing the whole context of the individual (the left hand of the spectrum) as well as including families and other professionals (the right hand side of the spectrum). Bentovim also mentions a range of treatment methods which have been emphasised within different theories across the spectrum.

Morrison's (2006) chapter on 'Building a Holistic Approach in the Treatment of Young People who Sexually Abuse' presents three levels of context: 'societal (macro); inter-agency (mezzo); and practice delivery (micro)' (ibid.: p.358). Echoing the systemic levels from Bronfenbrenner (1977) and Multi-Systemic Therapy, Morrison begins by taking the widest view of a 'socially toxic environment' (Morrison, 2006: p.359); close to Durham's (2006) political and social context but including more general societal problems of poverty and educational exclusion. The 'mezzo' level covers the service development and inter-agency challenges raised above under the AIM Model (Morrison & Henniker, 2006). Thirdly Morrison's 'micro' level covers a range of practice elements to make up a holistic approach, including 'a focus on the *whole* of a young person's experience and

identity' (Morrison, 2006: p.363) as emphasised by Longo (2002). Morrison offers what he calls a 'tentative' definition of holistic work:

> 'A holistic approach seeks to understand and address the YP/child's sexually problematic behaviour within the totality of his/her context and needs, by working in partnership with the young person/child and his/her significant others including family, school, and social support network to promote the healthy and sustained development of the young person/child.' (Morrison, 2006: p.358)

Published relatively recently in the USA, this definition cannot yet be said to be influential among UK practitioners, and was only sourced by the researcher from the British Library during a late stage of the research. However, the clinical opinions of Tony Morrison, who sadly died earlier this year, will be shown to reinforce the original findings from this study.

The holistic spectrum brings together the majority of the themes raised so far, from the importance of not simply focusing on the offence through the question of balancing welfare and justice and on to whether a holistic approach means looking at all aspects of an individual or how far it should incorporate a wider view of society. These issues will all be explored further through the rest of this study. Other issues raised by the different approaches above include the variety of methods which can be used to work with young people who have sexually harmed, multi-agency and interagency approaches and the importance of working together with the young person's family and community. Morrison (2006) identified ten important features of holistic practice which are paraphrased below:

a) Accessible – flexible hours & location including in local communities, not just office.
b) Family as partners – proactively involving family/carers, not just as sources of info.
c) Balance risks, needs, strengths & protective factors – equally during assessment
d) Focus on whole young person – not just their sexual behaviour problem
e) Responsive, customised services – to engage and suit young person and family
f) A choice of methods – using individual, family and group work; not one size fits all.
g) Collaborative process – engagement, relationships, continuity of service, feedback
h) Focus on social & emotional competence – as much as offence specific tasks
i) Services for victims – ensuring victims receive service as well as 'abusers'
j) Multi-disciplinary delivery – sharing responsibility for these young people

(paraphrased from Morrison, 2006: p.363)

Many of these features will be seen in the four key themes from this study which will be discussed towards the end of this chapter. Prior to this, a more general understanding of the term holistic will be sought, to clarify the reasons why this term has come to prominence in the field of work with young people who have sexually harmed, and to focus the meaning and implications of working holistically.

Holistic and Holism in wider literature

Over half of all references to holistic in the academic database Scopus (scopus.com) are sourced from the fields of medicine or nursing, but the term is also used in a wide range of fields including computer science, psychology and business. In medical fields, holistic medicine and links to complementary and alternative therapies are treated with varying levels of respect. Ernst (2004) makes a useful distinction between holistic or integrative *approaches* to treatment and the 'often unproven therapies these practices use' (ibid.: p.565). He argues that scientific medicine and holism are in no way incompatible, although modern medicine has generally neglected the idea of the whole person. However, he is keen to distance himself from views which say that integrative or holistic medicine necessarily includes complementary or alternative therapies unless these have a strong evidence base.

Holistic approaches to wellness link both medical and social work fields, and draw from diverse sources including Native American concepts (Weaver, 2002). Myers & Sweeney (2008) cite Hettler (1984) as the creator of the first wellness model, which is made up of 6 segments of a hexagon: physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and occupational areas of wellbeing. Hettler defers to Gulich who created the influential mind, body, spirit triangle of the YMCA in the early 20th century (Hettler, undated). The consideration of mind, body and spirit can be attributed to Plato (Larson, 2004) but is also key within Eastern philosophical traditions of Daoism, Buddhism and traditional Chinese medicine (Leung et al., 2009).

Brendtro et al. (1990, 2005 & undated) also used a Native American Lakota medicine wheel to devise their 'Circle of Courage' which was further developed by Longo (2001,

2002) in his work with those who have sexually harmed. The Lakota medicine wheel which includes four wellness areas: mind, body, spirit and the emotions (Warne, 1992; 2005) has a history said to date back thousands of years. As well as presenting aspects of the self, the Lakota approach also emphasises the importance of family, community and culture in wellness. Warne (2005) cites his uncle Rick Two Dogs' explanation that:

> 'We need to understand that the primary reason our people are so afflicted with addiction, poverty, abuse and strife, is that our way of life was taken from us. Everything was taken. And nothing was replaced' (Arbogast, 1995 cited in Warne, 2005: p.543).

While a wholesale attribution of problems of abuse to cultural oppression may be too simplistic, better understanding of cultural influences and family cultures is necessary for the effective addressing of sexual harm issues.

Colley (2003) discusses the origins and uses of holism in her article about youth mentoring. She states how a holistic approach was key to the development of Carl Rogers' person-centred counselling theories and this is evident in his ideas around 'being process' and 'being complexity' (Rogers, 1961). Rogers' work, while acknowledging some effects on family life, is clearly focused on the individual, and so could be said to influence the left hand side of the holistic spectrum above. Rogers' emphasis on creativity could also be seen to support the alternative and creative treatment methods advocated by Longo (2002) and Bannister (1998).

Another useful contribution from Colley (2003) is her genealogy of holism, and her discussion of approaches such as the focus on recording achievement of young people which claimed to be holistic but actually required a codifying and de-individualizing process:

> 'Such approaches in fact represent everything that is antithetical to the original concept of holism. They appropriate the notion of holism in a rhetorical fashion, but apply it in a wholly inappropriate way by confusing totality (a sum of parts) with the whole (an organically inter-related entity). One important consequence is that individual attributes of the person become divorced from wider contexts including social structures.' (p.82)

The importance of the contrast between a sum of parts and an integrated whole will be a repeated theme throughout this study. Colley also refers to the importance of the wider contexts and social structures which typify the right hand side of the holistic spectrum above.

Prilleltensky & Nelson (2000) discuss balancing child wellness and family wellness in terms of a prevention-intervention continuum and ecological levels of analysis. They suggest more of a prevention and community focus, in contrast to prevailing attitudes where the majority of funding goes to treatment rather than prevention, and focuses on the individual child rather than a model of social responsibility. The two main concepts they propose could be used to plot models on Cartesian axes which emphasise either the young person or the family as the key focus for a response, perhaps along the horizontal axis, while plotting the focus on treatment or prevention on the vertical axis, see figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Axes for prevention/intervention

The models included on the holistic spectrum above could all be said to be intervention models, but a greater focus on preventative work could be argued to be part of a holistic response. This diagram will be developed in chapter nine with the addition of different models and intervention/ prevention strategies as suggested by the findings.

Ruch (2005) examines holistic approaches to child care social work, and begins by identifying the way practitioners need to engage with the rational and emotional aspects of a client's behaviour, seeing the individual as a complex, multi-faceted whole. She argues this requires a relationship rather than the procedure and bureaucracy that is common to so much contemporary social work practice. She goes on to describe the importance of holistic reflective practice as a way for practitioners to consider and develop their work, and how this includes a certain risk-tolerance - being informed and realistic about risk including in an example where a perpetrator of abuse was carefully rehabilitated into the family. Here the focus is more on the worker and their attitudes and choices, while recognising the limitations and challenges posed by systems and bureaucracy.

A more critical view of some holistic and joined up practices in work with young homeless people is offered by Allen (2003). Here the opportunities for social control of the 'whole person' leading to holistic power held by professionals are examined, with reference to Foucauldian ideas related to power and discipline. Even questions about a young person's hobbies used by professionals to 'get to know' a young person are seen by Allen as attempts 'to intrude into every aspect of the residents' lifestyle as well as character' (ibid.: p.296). This is a rare example of a criticism of a holistic approach - generally the word is seen as undeniably positive, as also questioned by Allen:

> 'The teleological rational here is that whilst the primary modern welfare system had 'containerized' the problems of young people and therefore failed to adequately solve them, the new 'joined-up' and holistic welfare system has been 'renewed' and can now 'see everything', 'know everything' and 'do anything''. (ibid.: p.293)

This offers some cautions for holistic work, and challenges professionals to question their ideological stance and reasoning when seeking to gain the power given by knowledge of a young person. The responsibility of acting fairly and bringing justice to a young person as well as the victims of any crimes links back to the Gault case (see p.14) and how even well thought of welfare approaches can be disproportionate, unjust or abusive. Concerns for the victims of sexual harm will be addressed later in this chapter.

Challenges to holistic working in the literature include the work of Cribb et al. (1994) who identify co-operation and role indeterminacy as major challenges to holistic nursing by specialist paediatric oncology nurses. These challenges will be further considered as the theme of multi-agency working is examined at length later in this study.

Already a number of different 'levels' of holism have been cited in relation to working with young people. First a holistic ideology which seeks to acknowledge the whole picture has been identified in traditional models of wellness and associated models developed more recently. The need to include all aspects and the inter-connected nature of these aspects has been highlighted by Colley (2003). Second, holistic attitudes may be held by professionals, perhaps prioritising a relationship or reflection on practice as in Ruch (2005) but also potentially leading to overbearing power and control (Allen, 2003). Third, holistic methods, whether involving alternative medicine or other techniques influenced by a holistic ideology may be used; however, these present only a small subset of the possibility of holistic practice. While this study will include exploration of any meanings of holistic working to different professionals, the primary focus will be on a wider holistic ideology, with secondary examination of related attitudes and methods.

Summary so far

So far this chapter has sought to give background and context to the issues of youth offending, child sexual abuse and responses to sexual offending and then introduced the client group of young people who have sexually harmed. Responses to these young people have been outlined, and ideas of working holistically with these young people have been presented. Four main areas connected with this work will now be explored in greater detail, namely: seeing the whole young person; working with wider family and peers; working in a multi-agency way; and using a range of creative methods. The evolution of these main themes of the study will be explained in detail throughout later chapters, but an overview of the relevant literature will be included here.

Meanings of working holistically with young people

Seeing the whole young person

A simple dictionary definition of holism (and its derivative, holistic) leads to the consideration of wholes, and

> 'the theory that certain wholes are greater than the sum of their parts. The opposite of ATOMISM' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001).

As has been suggested above, the whole to be considered may be the *whole* young person, the *whole* family context, the *whole* situation following an abusive or harmful incident (which might include more focus on the victim(s) as well as the community) or a *whole* response to sexual harm by young people in general, which would necessarily imply a more preventative and societal response. The contrast with atomism:

> 'a theoretical approach that regards something as interpretable through analysis into distinct, separable and independent elementary components' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001)

might seem less relevant when looking at human situations rather than chemical organic matter. However, the analysis of risk factors or even assessment areas common to tools such as Asset, ERASOR, J-SOAP and the Common Assessment Framework could be said to be atomistic, dividing a young person and their situation into a series of distinct, separable and in some cases quantifiable factors. The Asset tool (YJB, 2006) is structured around twelve dynamic risk factors to indicate risk of reoffending and also gathers information regarding positive factors, indicators of vulnerability and indicators of serious harm to others. The sum of scores on the twelve dynamic risk factors as an indicator for intervention needs has the empirical supporting evidence but the more thoroughly completed document would allow a worker to gain a much wider overview of the young person's needs for intervention. The Risk Factors Prevention Paradigm (RFPP) used in Asset has been described by O'Mahony (2009) as reductionist and unrealistic in terms of understanding crime. An approach which has a holistic ideology will likely include objections or reservations regarding these tools, whether or not they can claim to be empirical or 'evidence based'.

A theme around *seeing* the whole also raises issues to do with how we see: our perspectives, where we look, what affects our vision. The subjective nature of seeing, as opposed to the idea that we can easily calculate the whole, appraise the whole or otherwise let the whole be conclusively 'known' also relates to theories of knowledge and recalls Foucault's theories of 'the medical gaze' (Foucault, 1973). Foucault discussed the development of modern medicine as the patient was removed from their natural family context into the isolating environment of the clinic. He identified the contract between the poor patients who submitted to observation by the rich doctors and hospital investors. Additionally Foucault's discussion of medicine based on a reduction of illness to a combination of physical symptoms has further usefulness to a consideration of holism and atomism:

> 'The Gaze that envelops, caresses, details, atomizes the most individual flesh and enumerates its secret bites is that fixed, attentive, rather dilated gaze which, from the height of death, has already condemned life.' (ibid.: p.171)

The combination of mass observation by medical staff in clinics clearly had benefits for all in terms of increasing medical knowledge. However, care for the individual is diminished by the gaze which avoids intervention but seeks knowledge and power as far as the autopsy.

Notwithstanding the discussion about whether the focus should be on the individual or not, this next section will refer to the literature regarding seeing the whole young person in relation to working with young people who have sexually harmed (see Morrison, 2006: p.363**d** *and above*). As has been stated above, the need to recognise the young person's developmental status is key to both responding differently to young people as opposed to adult offenders (Juvenile Offenders Bill, 1838) and to recognising a wider context of needs as identified in both the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their families* (DH, 2000) and the AIM assessment model (Henniker et al., 2002). In contrast to an offence-specific or abuse-focused approach, working holistically will not follow the strictly justice model of targeting an individual offence and exacting a measured response/punishment. While the merits of a measured response have been seen in the Gault case and are key to the McGuire principles informing effective practice

(McGuire & Priestley, 1995) this can be debated within a holistic model. It is important to repeat that some offence-specific or abuse-specific work will always be necessary with young people who have sexually harmed, and it is not the aim of this study to detract from efforts to make this part of the work as effective as possible. Tailoring the work to acknowledge the specific incident(s) and circumstances is also important (Araji, 1997). However, in focusing on a more holistic response, this study moves beyond responses which solely focus on the offence or sexual harm.

There is perhaps a distinction between what response should be mandated or prescribed by law, and what response should be available or offered to a young person and their family on a voluntary basis. While a holistic approach may be seen as more beneficial to a young person and their family, there is a question as to how far this overlaps with effective work in targeting the wider criminogenic factors likely to affect any future offending. Interventions addressing criminogenic factors frequently target 'anti-social' attitudes, habitual patterns of thought and feeling associated with criminality, personal control issues and peer associations, developing social skills, and promoting family support (Andrews, 1995). The clear focus on reducing reoffending as the priority for Youth Offending Teams affects the degree to which welfare concerns can be addressed within a statutory order. However, a mandated period of two year's supervision order (not an unusual judicial response to a serious sexual offence by a young person) affords time to address issues outside the obvious offence-specific and criminogenic factors. Also the *Key Elements of Effective Practice* series title (YJB, 2008b) does include areas such as emotional competence and social skills which can be interpreted within a wider welfare brief.

Seeing the whole young person will include seeing their needs and strengths, (see Morrison, 2006: p.363**c**) as well as maintaining an awareness of the integrated whole. The young person's needs will include finding ways of avoiding future offending or harmful behaviour since this has negative impacts on their future prospects and liberty as well as the harm to others. Other needs can include welfare, safety and housing issues, as well as emotional and mental health needs which will frequently include responses to trauma, victimisation or sexual exploitation. The emphases on recognising

and building on a young person's strengths have already been mentioned as key to several holistic approaches, perhaps most explicitly in the Good Lives model (Collie et al., 2007) and the AIM framework (Henniker et al., 2002). Seeing the positive aspects of a young person argues strongly against labelling them as a 'sex offender' or 'abuser' but recognises their potential (strong likelihood) as a young person to move on to a positive and non-abusing future.

Some of the challenges relating to seeing the whole young person include the task of engaging the young people and encouraging them to talk and reveal more of themselves and their strengths and needs (Lambie, 2005). An unwillingness to see certain aspects of a young person, such as sexual behaviour from young people with learning difficulties (Fyson, 2007) may come from individual and societal prejudices. Other general factors limiting such thorough work include the available time and local expertise of professionals and suitable training and consultancy (Hackett et al., 2003). This was expressed in the most popular response to the 'miracle' question from the Hackett et al. study, where practitioners were asked to imagine a situation where services for young people who had sexually abused had miraculously improved overnight and to choose up to three improvements they would notice. Workers from non-statutory services dreamed that:

> 'Resources would be available to fund locally-based services, able to respond promptly and flexibly to the needs of all children and young people with sexual behaviour problems and their families holistically, drawing on specialist inputs, such as psychology and psychiatry, as necessary (31/58 service respondents)' (ibid.: p.80).

More time and better training were mentioned as priorities by a number of YOT and non-statutory respondents.

In identifying other relevant needs that may need to be addressed, the various assessment models provide a wide range of relevant areas. Longo (2002) writes:

> 'A holistic model addresses and includes *all life issues* and strives for balance and harmony' (Longo, 2002: p.222, my emphasis).

Housing issues are known to be a significant issue for adult offenders including sexual offenders (McCall, 1998, Flint, 2006) and have been linked to suicidal behaviour in young offenders (Howard et al., 2003). The need for a young person to have a safe and stable living environment during difficult treatment work is reflected in the indicators of low strengths within the AIM framework including the 'absence of a supportive/ structured living environment' and 'isolated family' (Morrison & Henniker, 2006: p.50).

One area that is frequently included in working with the whole young person is the task of addressing issues relating to the young person's own victim experiences (Bannister, 1998, Hackett, 2002, Vizard & Usiskin, 2006) and/or trauma (Mulholland & McIntee, 1999, Creeden, 2005). Some young people may also have been sexually exploited, although less evidence is available to support this link (Farmer & Pollock, 1998; Pearce, 2009). Creeden (2005) particularly argues for an *integrated* treatment approach stating that:

> 'the fundamental goal in treating abusive behaviour should not be defined as merely the absence of abuse in relationships, but as the increased capacity to engage and maintain stable, mutual, and intimate relationships with others' (p.207).

Creeden reports that a failure to address the impact of trauma on a young person limits the effective learning and use of skills to control and change harmful sexual behaviour. The recent prominence of research into the neurological impact of trauma (Teicher et al., 2002) and insecure attachment (Schore, 1994) provides the beginning of an argument that working with the whole person, including their physical neurobiology and their related emotional health and ability to learn is essential to allowing more cognitive-behavioural methods to be effective. Creeden (2005) writes:

> 'Understanding the brain's response to both trauma and disorganised attachment experiences also directs us to interventions that are developmental, holistic, humanistic, and strength-based on both an individual and systemic level.' (p.203)

This offers a further reasoning for the vital importance of work within the family system and in strengthening attachment relationships as well as the need for work to be appropriate to a young person's developmental level.

Working with wider family and peers - including group work and prevention

It will already be clear that working with a young person's family is a key component of holistic working within some of the frameworks identified, particularly those of Hackett et al. (1998), Multi-Systemic Therapy (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005) and the AIM model (Morrison & Henniker, 2006) which form the mid-section of the holistic spectrum above. This section will examine wider theoretical support for working with a young person's family as found in the literature. The other local system in which the young person is embedded could be said to be their peer group (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005; Durham, 2006) and the possibilities of intervention with peers, including on a more generalised preventative level will also be described.

An early mention of the need for a systemic approach to sexual abuse was made by Bentovim (1991) in his model which sought to:

> 'integrate work with individuals, the family as a group, and society as represented by statutory care and criminal justice agencies.' (p.182).

Family work was considered one of the essential components of intervention in Hackett et al.'s (2003) Delphi study of practitioners, and other authors discuss it in similarly strong terms (Duane & Morrison, 2004; Johnson & Doonan, 2005.) Talking particularly about younger children, Johnson & Doonan state:

> 'If the children [who have sexually harmed] live with their biological parents and have grown up with them, the parents and the environment they provide will likely be a significant part of the problem and therefore a major part of the solution.' (ibid.: p.54)

Abusive family experiences are key to the framework presented by Barbaree et al. (1998) for the aetiology of 'sexual deviance' in adolescents, and this is supported in the strong evidence that adolescents who have sexually harmed have a high rate of childhood maltreatment: not simply sexual abuse but commonly physical abuse or neglect (Way, 2002). While acknowledging problems with family sexuality and less positive communication within this group, Letourneau & Swenson (2005) also stress how the strong influence that parents and carers have can be harnessed to help the young people,

since the caregivers have or can develop more control over the factors within the family, peer and school setting which are linked to sexual offending. Ideas of partnership with parents have already been discussed above in more general child protection contexts (Corby, 2006; HM Government, 2010), but this is also key to work with young people who have sexually harmed (see Morrison, 2006: p.363**b**).

Hackett's (2001) text, *Facing the future*, is a resource for parents of young people who have sexually harmed and combines information and support for parents and carers. Portions of the book challenge parents to consider the influences of their own behaviour and promote ways of making changes and protecting others but this is done sensitively with much acknowledgement of the painful situations faced by families and hope for a positive future. A realistic appraisal recognises that parents contribute both to the difficulties and strengths in finding a positive outcome.

Challenges rising from family denial and minimisation are addressed by Barnes & Hughes (2002) who advocate better understanding of parents' and carers' long-held beliefs and patterns of behaviour which in turn have influenced the young person's beliefs, behaviour and relationships. Group work with parents can be effective in decreasing isolation and giving opportunities to share feelings and learn from each other (Hackett et al., 2002). The culture of being heard and understood was considered to be of vital importance. The value of working collaboratively and engaging families with good continuity of service was stressed by Morrison (2006: p.363**g**) and Chaffin et al. (2008).

Cherry & O'Shea (2006) discuss the importance of the family being a resource for the young person, as well as the way difficulties with the family may bring out a range of wider needs for support and education for the parents or carers in addition to the needs of the young person. Finally they discuss the additional complexities in cases of intrafamilial sibling abuse including competing loyalties and needs to support and protect both the victim and the sibling who sexually harmed (also in Hackett et al., 1998, above). The importance of work with victims of sexual abuse has its own wide supporting literature but is generally less emphasised within texts addressing young

people who have sexually harmed although some do combine the two (Bannister, 1998; Horwath, 2001; Hollin & Howells, 1991). Work with victims was emphasised within Morrison's features of holistic work above (Morrison, 2006: p.363**i**). The question of how far work with victims is part of a holistic approach to sexual harm will be explored later within the research but the main focus of this study is on work with the young people who have sexually harmed, who may have their own victim experiences as has been mentioned above.

The tendency for family members to feel disempowered and fear being blamed is also raised by Cherry & O'Shea (2006), but they state how respect for the families' knowledge and strengths can boost motivation for change and encourage positive engagement. Their family work is influenced by systems theory (also key to Multi-Systemic Therapy), narrative therapy, social constructionism, solution-focused approaches and feminism (see also Durham, 2006).

The influence of peers can similarly be seen to be a source of problems but also key to finding ways forward in treatment of young people who have sexually harmed. The young person's peer network can reinforce negative attitudes about power, masculinity and heterosexism (Durham, 2006), but in treatment, group-work has been found to promote self-disclosure, reduce stigma and isolation and allow peer education and reinforcement (O'Callaghan et al., 2006). Bumby & Talbot (2007) discuss the concern and controversy around peer-group interventions with 'delinquent peers' including research by Dishion et al. (1999) which found significant negative effects from some peer-group interventions such as the use of summer camps with young people considered at risk of delinquency. However, the on-going use of group treatment with young people who have sexually harmed and the demonstrated treatment effects lead Bumby & Talbot (2007) to conclude that further research is needed.

Group-work is a major part of treatment by specialist providers such as G-MAP (Greater Manchester Adolescent Programme, O'Callaghan et al., 2006) and SWAAY (formerly Social Work for Abused & Abusing Youth, Edwards et al., 2007). SWAAY's integrated approach emphasises the need to be multi-modal and involves a sequence of group-work

programmes alongside individual work, family work and educational and residential provision (ibid.). They consider the need for therapeutic residential provision to be self-evident in cases with more severe offending patterns and complex needs, although this would probably be disputed by advocates of Multi-Systemic, home-based treatments such as Multi-Systemic Therapy (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005). However, there is clearly a challenge when young people who have sexually harmed are unable to stay at home due to unacceptable risk to or from other family members.

Group work is also the typical mode of delivery for more preventative programmes such as those offered to young people through schools (Rispens et al., 1997). Keep-safe programmes may be offered as a general intervention to all children as part of a strategy to reduce sexual harm. Carson (2006) comments how assemblies, circle time, year group and curriculum work can all be used to raise themes about safety and protection as well as respect and responsibility. She adds how:

> 'They can be a way of heightening awareness of safety issues without drawing attention to an individual or breaking confidentiality.' (p.61)

Finkelhor's (2009) article suggests that although school sexual abuse prevention programmes have not been shown by experiment to prevent sexual abuse, the outcome studies demonstrating successful learning of concepts and increased disclosure of sexual abuse give encouragement to continue this work and conduct further evaluation studies.

The influence of prevention work can also be seen in a number of parenting programmes including the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme (Sanders et al., 2003) being offered to parents of children and teenagers. Barth (2009) argues that such evidence-based programmes offer a useful scaled approach to intervention and that effectiveness trials are needed to demonstrate whether these programmes can be successful in reducing child maltreatment. Stagner & Lansing (2009) similarly conclude that systematic testing of different interventions is needed to compare approaches based on education, support groups, home visits, community programmes and family therapy.

Working in a multi-agency way - and some inherent challenges to this

It has already been mentioned how the AIM Project (Morrison & Henniker, 2006) emphasise multi-agency protocols, awareness raising and training as being key elements within their programme. Inter-agency and multi-agency working were seen as part of Morrison's (2006: p.358) 'mezzo' level, above, but also feature within his more practice based 'micro' level (ibid.: p.363**j**). Dosio & Boer (2007) describe a South African multi-agency programme model called SAMARI for young sex offenders living with HIV/AIDS. Their approach combines 'effective' treatment methods with systemic involvement of 'medical, educational and family support systems to facilitate community reintegration' (p. 1). Even when multi-agency working is not a key part of a programme design, it will be seen to be a vital consideration in working with these young people.

Frequent and at times catastrophic failings in multi-agency and interagency co-operation have also been highlighted within the consideration of developments across the child protection field in general. The importance of good interagency working in child protection services has been emphasised for years (Hallett, 1995), and repeatedly identified as being seriously lacking in investigations mentioned above into the child deaths of Maria Colwell (DHSS, 1974) and Victoria Climbié (Laming, 2003) as well as the Cleveland Inquiry (Butler-Sloss, 1988). Criticism of communication, collective and individual responsibility and the need for a suitable 'system' are described by Murphy (2004) as themes coming through these inquiries and being developed in the 1990s.

Government guidelines and policies to improve multi-agency working have included *Working Together Under the Children Act 1989* (DH, 1991a), which included the identification of young people who sexually abuse as a child protection matter where official responses and interventions should be situated within child protection procedures, under the leading of the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC). This committee comprised local members of social care, health, police, probation, education and other voluntary agencies. Subsequent *Working Together* publications (DH, 1998; DH et al., 1999) continued to require ACPCs to take lead responsibility for young people who sexually abuse, but moved this work outside the child protection system unless

clear evidence existed that the young person was also a victim of abuse at continued risk of further abuse.

Meanwhile, the launch of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in 2000 followed the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), assigning to these multi-agency teams the remit of preventing youth crime and co-ordinating treatment programmes. Calder (2001) points out how different branches of Government allocated responsibility for young people who had sexually harmed to either the ACPC or the YOT, and developed core assessment documents (Asset and the Assessment Framework) that do not effectively coincide.

Later, *Every Child Matters* (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003), the Government Green Paper following the Laming enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié led to the adoption through the Children Act (2004) of multi-agency Children's Trusts and the replacement of ACPCs with Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs). As mentioned above, the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2006; 2010) sets out how agencies should work in partnership to meet Local Authorities' obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including those who have abused others. The guidance includes the need for a multi-agency assessment as well an overall multi-agency approach:

> 'including youth justice (where appropriate), children's social care, education (including educational psychology) and health (including child and adolescent mental health) agencies and police'. (HM Government, 2010: p.303).

Further recommendations include maintaining clear frameworks and consultation between LSCBs and YOTs for assessment, decision-making and case-management; separately addressing both the needs of victims and the needs of the young people who have abused. Owen (2009) also describes more general policy and practice changes from protection to safeguarding and highlights some unresolved issues regarding the Common Assessment Framework (CWDC, 2010a) and information sharing, including the now decommissioned ContactPoint database (Loughton, 2010b).

Many different models of multi-agency working have been proposed (Gregson et al, 1992; Rawson, 1994; Hudson, 1998; Leathard, 2003; Atkinson et al., 2005). Hudson (1998)

usefully separated models of communication, coordination, co-location and commissioning between agencies while Gregson et al. (1992) considered different degrees of collaboration within teams. Hallett (1995) presented a range of approaches and taxonomies of cooperation and collaboration in health care in her efforts to define coordination in child protection. Burnett & Appleton's (2004) research at Oxfordshire YOT brought out the contrasts between multi-agency working and interagency working, using the metaphor suggested by one middle manager in the team as multi-agency being a fruit salad approach compared to the fruit cake approach of interagency work. In the fruit salad, the individual pieces retain their identity while forming part of a unified whole; while in the fruit cake, the ingredients are indistinguishable from each other within the mixture. The practitioners were keen to be an interagency blended team, with 'shared knowledge, easier access to other services and expertise, and improved referral processes' (ibid.: p.37). The authors write:

> 'Their assessment of inter-agency working reflected a belief that it was indeed facilitating a holistic approach whereby all of the interlinked factors that underpin the offending behaviour of a young person could be appropriately addressed'. (ibid.)

The research also identified a number of benefits involved in multi-agency or interagency working, including mutual exchange of professional expertise, including academic, practical and local knowledge and speed of access to information, advice and specialist attention.

Burnett & Appleton (ibid.) also presented some of the challenges of multi-agency working. These included cultural differences such as acceptable language and contrast of welfare and evidence based approaches; discrepancies in pay and leave between member professions, as well as levels of training; suspicions and difficulties with shared IT systems; potential for gaps in service formed by a number of partially overlapping roles; and difficulties in gaining appropriate funding from partner agencies.

Calder (1999) set out a framework for managing young people who sexually abuse, emphasising the need for a consortium approach. He cites Margetts (1998), Charles and Stevenson (1990), Woodhouse and Pengally (1991), Morrison (1992, 1994), Fargason et al.

(1994) and Pearce (1991), quoting and expanding on a number of benefits and many more areas of conflict within inter-agency working within child protection and child sexual abuse in particular. An attempt to summarise these is in the tables below:

Table 1. Benefits of working together in sexual abuse cases (from Margetts, 1998)

Benefits of working together in sexual abuse cases (from Margetts, 1998, cited in Calder, 1999)
Shared information: pooling knowledge of individuals, better assessment of risk
Shared responsibility: agreeing a way forward in difficult and dangerous cases
Services not duplicated
Services deployed according to need rather than referral route
Effective practice development: shared knowledge and skills
Shared intelligence and public protection concerns
Resources used more efficiently and effectively

Atkinson et al. (2005) reported findings from a National Foundation for Educational Research study of multi-agency working which reviewed literature and interviewed professionals from education, social services and health. The identified challenges and key factors for success are summarised below, arranged to correspond but with rank importance indicated by the figures in brackets.

Table 2. Challenges & success factors in multi-agency working. Adapted from Atkinson et al. (2005)

Challenges		**Key factors for success**	
Fiscal resources	(1)	Sharing and access to funding and resources	(7)
Non-fiscal resources	(4)		
Roles and responsibilities	(2)	Understanding roles and responsibilities	(2)
Competing priorities	(3)	Common aims and objectives	(3)
Communication	(5)	Communication and information sharing	(4)
Professional & agency cultures	(6)	Commitment or willingness to be involved	(1)
Management	(7)	Leadership or drive	(5)
Training opportunities	(8)	Involving the relevant personnel	(6)

Rawson (1994) identifies four main inhibitors of inter-professional working:

- poor communications and language differences (DH 1991b; Kilcoyne 1991; Pietroni 1992);
- conflicting power relationships (Blane 1991);
- ideological differences (Stevenson 1985); and
- role confusions (Ross and Campbell 1992; Opuku 1992) (p.39).

Morrison's (2006: p.352) 'Barriers to Holistic Services' can all be considered within the multi-agency arena. He highlights the:

1) Impact of anxiety…
2) Complexity and challenges of changing practice…
3) Competing and conflicting priorities …
4) [Need for a] Stable responsive workforce (ibid.: pp.352-355).

Anxiety is identified by Morrison within families as well as in professional, organisation, institutional and judicial responses to you people who have sexually harmed. Challenges in making changes to practice are illustrated by reference to implementing changes from the Children Act 1989 (DH, 1995a; Spratt, 2001). Morrison also describes difficulties from competing Government targets and with 'recruitment and retention of competent and motivated staff' (Morrison, 2006: p.355).

The other academics cited by Calder (1999) contributed details of many more barriers to inter-professional working and these are compared in Table 3 below. The three areas of Values, Clarity and Resources will be presented later in chapter seven of this thesis.

Table 3. Barriers to working together in child protection/ sexual abuse work

	Barriers to working together...				
	in child protection (Charles & Stevenson 1990 and Stevenson 1989)	with child sexual abuse work (Morrison 1992, Woodhouse & Pengally 1991)	managing child sexual abuse (Fargason et al 1994)	in sexual abuse work (Pearce 1991)	in management of sexual abuse (Morrison 1994)
Values	Differences in background and training	Abstraction from other crime		Interests of child or of offender	
	Varied attitudes to family life				
	Stereotypes and prejudices			'Criminality' factor	Societal attitudes
	Role identification and socialisation	Alienation from colleagues	Socialisation	'Personality' factor	
	Differences within and between professionals	Absence of professional guidance and standards			
	Status and power				
	Professional and organisational priorities	Lack of agency ownership	Goal incompatibility	Agency as servant or surveyor of community	
	Changes in philosophy	Clashes in philosophy		Punishment or therapy	
	Anxiety and child protection	Anxiety and child sexual abuse			
Clarity	Structures, systems and administration		Interdependence		Legislation
	Different roles and responsibilities			Statutory duties or not	
	Lines of authority and decision-making	Inadequate supervision			Role of the courts
	Complexity and co-ordination			Complexity	
	Communication			Media contribution	
	'Underlapping service provision'		Performance expectations		
	Organisational restructuring				The pace of change
Resources	(not listed)		Resource limitations		Resources

Morrison (2004) considers how services and staff can work effectively with young people who have sexually harmed and emphasises the need for skilled staff to build and maintain empathic and beneficial therapeutic relationships with clients in addition to good quality inter-professional collaboration. He recognises tensions in intervention philosophy between professional groups and the need for a shared mandate with stable funding, clear eligibility criteria and good staff management including the importance of supervision and training.

The UK mapping survey (Hackett et al., 2003) included responses from a large number of YOT based professionals and managers as well as non-statutory services. One of the key findings was the complex, multi-agency organisational and funding arrangements frequently facing the non-YOT organisations. Improved inter-agency co-ordination was the second most frequently desired improvement (by 35/111 YOTs) following a 'miracle' question (the first was local specialist provision). Fewer than half the YOTs and other services reported that formal inter-agency protocols about work with young people who have sexually abused had been agreed locally, and around 40% of YOTs and other services had negotiated local multi-agency agreements about provision of services for these young people. A considerable lack of consistency was found across the UK in the holding of child protection meetings and multi-agency meetings. Further multi-agency training was also considered desirable in many cases, the effectiveness of which was supported by Carpenter et al. (2010).

Criticism of multi-agency approaches include ways that they can involve numerous breaches in confidentiality, forming an infringement of civil liberties; excessive formality and a distance from issues on the ground; a tendency to believe that a multi-agency approach can solve any crisis and a risk that minority opinions and issues are overlooked (Sampson et al., 1988). The power base held by an effective multi-agency team (however rare these may be) could be seen as deeply intimidating for service users (Allen, 2003). Other relevant questions regarding multi-agency working include the need to tackle entrenched professional identities which routinely use 'atrocity stories' to blame other professions and whether co-location necessarily leads to better communication (White & Featherstone, 2005; Smith & Anderson, 2008). The need to be flexible around location

and working hours to be accessible as part of the community was another key feature for Morrison (2006: p.363**a**)**.** Community approaches to safeguarding were also described by Jack & Gill (2010).

In addition to AIM (Morrison & Henniker, 2006) and the SAMARI project (Dosio & Boer, 2007) mentioned above, another approach that explicitly makes use of the multi-agency team and community is Social Responsibility Therapy (Yokley et al., 2007). Here the idea that it takes a village to raise a child is cited as reason to involve three main groups in intervention with preteen children who have sexually harmed: primary caretakers (often including foster carers or residential staff); intervention staff (including social workers, counsellors, psychologists etc.); and community supervision staff (such as teachers, mentors, youth workers). The method uses all these groups to build multi-cultural pro-social values and to support and supervise the young people; often within a therapeutic community setting. An emphasis on re-parenting being everyone's responsibility puts the onus on the wider community to build social responsibility in young people. This approach clearly belongs on the far right of the holistic spectrum, but also incorporates something of a creative approach which more typifies the left hand side.

Using a range of creative methods - and Evidence Based Practice

The use of creative and alternative methods is part of some of the models on the Holistic Spectrum above, see p42, most obviously the left hand side of the spectrum: Longo (2001) and Bannister (1998). It has already been mentioned how the word holistic has associations with alternative medicine, and Ernst's (2004) distinction above between a holistic viewpoint and the use of 'unproven therapies' is useful. The debate about proof and evidence-based practice is a key one, and literature relevant to this will be summarised under this section. With inconclusive evidence regarding some of the most used treatment methods, the evidence for more innovative treatments affecting recidivism is unsurprisingly hard to find. However, in the context of more holistic approaches, other treatment aims connected to welfare and wider needs suggest evidence of other positive outcomes should be considered. Morrison (2006: p.363**f**)

stresses the need for 'a choice of methods: individual, family and group [work], and an avoidance of a "one size fits all" approach.' Hackett et al. (2003) reported strong agreement with the need to draw on a range of models, again avoiding the one size fits all approach. They reported a lack of consensus around the priority for creative and adaptive approaches but found 59% of practitioners agreed with the statement that:

> 'being creative and inventive and adaptive is more important than any one theoretical approach' (p.20).

The wording of this statement leaves the issue open to interpretation, since the lack of consensus may be due to the strength of importance given. It seems likely that a milder positive statement about creative, inventive approaches would have achieved consensus. However, criticism of treatment which combines different techniques in a more 'ad hoc' manner without clear guiding theories is reported by Chaffin et al. (2002: p.217).

The undeniable influence of Evidence-Based Practice has been seen in the 'What Works' agenda in criminal and youth justice (e.g. McGuire & Priestly, 1995; Sherman, 1997; Furniss & Nutley, 2000; Wilcox, 2003); however, the movement has been critically considered by academics including those from probation and the social work arena (Mair, 2006; Webb, 2001). Webb (2001) questions the underlying influences of evidence-based practice, citing behavioural social work as well as positivistic science and performance evaluation. He queries the scientific basis of evidence-based research, highlighting how complex decision making processes cannot be reduced to testable theories and he challenges the emphasis on a deterministic version of reality, maintaining that neither social workers nor their clients make decisions in such a delineated scientific way. Finally he stresses how evidence-based practice is directly linked into 'new managerialism' and sees this as a negative step prioritising objective accountability over the less measurable qualities in face-to-face relationships.

Defending evidence-based practice in social work, Gibbs & Gambrill (2002) counter most of Webb's arguments, and also highlight the way evidence-based practice is concerned with what is authoritative rather than authoritarian. Critical appraisal of evidence is vital since even medicine's 'gold standard' of evidence, the double-blind randomised placebo-controlled trial can be shown to fall short, involving effects such as 'masking bias' which

allow researchers to question the objectivity of this methodology (Kaptchuk, 2001). Taking account of the evidence has clear advantages over ignoring the evidence to follow what has always been done, but this has less application when evidence is inconclusive, minimal or non-existent. Unfortunately within youth justice and work with young people who have sexually harmed, choosing to use only evidence-based methods is far more difficult than politicians might suggest. Marshall & Marshall (2007) also call into question the validity of randomised controlled trials in evaluating treatment of sexual offenders; particularly questioning the study by Marques et al. (2005) and proposing alternative strategies for evaluating treatment.

Wilcox (2003) calls into question the validity of a number of early Youth Justice Board intervention evaluations, suggesting political expediency prevented full adherence to evidential standards. Additionally, as has been seen above, the effectiveness of interventions with young people who have sexually harmed is inconclusive in most cases, particularly in those that use reducing recidivism as the only outcome factor. Goldson (2010) provides an incisive review of New Labour and youth justice, pointing out how policy and evidence have grown further apart, even as the Government stressed 'evidence-based practice'. He summarises the evidence for the normality of youth offending, the stable rates of youth crime and the need for diversion, minimum necessary responses and universal, holistic interventions.

The successful evaluation of Multi-Systemic Therapy with young people who have sexually harmed is a positive example of a holistic approach with a demonstrated evidence base (Henggeler et al., 2009). Interestingly, this study used a variety of outcome measures including anti-social behaviour, deviant sexual interest and sexual risk behaviours, having stated the limitations of using recidivism as an outcome measure. Within the MST methodology, cognitive-behavioural therapy and pragmatic family approaches are used since these are seen to be evidence-based. However, the evidence base for the three main adaptations used: assessing and addressing drivers of denial; safety planning to minimise access to potential victims; and promoting pro-social peer contact is not made explicit. The study compared the results of MST with sexual offender-specific treatment in a group setting, which was considered informed best

practice. With both treatment groups receiving evidence-based interventions, the significant differences in outcomes can be credited to the mode of treatment. This study drew particular attention to the benefits of increased care-giver follow through on discipline and decreased contact between the young person and 'bad friends'.

A further key argument for the use of a range of creative methods is the way these can increase engagement and responsivity, as included by Morrison (2006: p.363**e**). Print & O'Callaghan (2004) describe a selection of activities used to engage and motivate the young people during the early stages of work. They cite influences from Jenkins (1998) and Miller & Rollnick (1991) as being useful in encouraging the young people to engage in treatment and have motivation to change. Expanding on the 'Responsivity' principle from Andrews & Bonta (2003), Smallbone et al. (2008) outline the need for flexibility in work with 'adolescent sex offenders' and the development of new methods, particularly where:

> 'therapeutic engagement is more difficult with older youth, indigenous youth and those with more versatile criminal histories'. (p.130)

Smallbone et al. (2009) report the findings of a study into therapeutic engagement but conclude that it is difficult to identify which components of flexible, individualised and culturally sensitive intervention programmes led to improved engagement. The link between creative approaches and accessibility for people from outside dominant cultures is also made by Lewis (1999), who describes effective use of storytelling and ritual with African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans. Support for the responsivity principle has been questioned by Annison (2006) who is particularly cautious about the notion of learning styles, as will be discussed in chapter eight.

The innovations of Multi-Systemic Therapy could be seen to show creativity, but creative methods have been used with young people who have offended for many years, e.g. Ball et al. (1987) who suggest a range of groupwork games and exercises. Creative work with young people who have sexually harmed include arts therapies delivered by registered professionals such as dramatherapy, art therapy and music therapy, arts interventions by arts professionals (such as Geese Theatre Company, Fine Cell Work) and use of creative techniques such as role play, art work and trust exercises by non-specialists (Longo,

2001). Psychodrama has also been included in a Wilderness Programme for young people who have sexually offended (Lambie et al., 1997). Hughes (2005) surveyed a range of arts interventions in criminal justice work and found many examples of promising practice within a general need for more thorough and effective research. Geese Theatre Company (Baim et al., 2002) has an established reputation working within prisons and young offenders' institutions including work with sexual offenders. Blacker et al. (2008) demonstrated the promising effectiveness of a Geese Theatre Company programme addressing anger and aggression using a mixture of cognitive-behavioural and dramatherapy techniques. The importance of a focus on this social and emotional competence was stressed by Morrison (2006: p.363**h**). More qualitative research into drama projects such as Project Jump (Orme et al., 2007) which tackles sexual health issues could also be argued to have relevance for young people who have sexually harmed, although the evidence is more anecdotal.

Other creative interventions for working with young people who have sexually harmed do not state evidence beyond clinical experience. Tyo (2005) gives examples of 'interactive interventions' which appear to draw from play therapy and Gestalt therapy. The author is well qualified, with a social work Master's and play therapy training and is the lead therapist for a team of treatment centres in South Carolina. Unusually, the chapter she presents gives only a sample of exercises without any analysis or evidence of effectiveness. It is unclear whether in cases like this, evaluative research has been inconclusive or simply not attempted. The need for further research to build stronger cases for the use of creative methods is frequently repeated by agencies such as the British Association of Dramatherapists (Andersen-Warren, 2009).

Taking the research forward

The breadth of issues involved in working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed has been shown to be considerable, with relevant literature coming from fields of social work, youth work and Government documentation as well as youth justice and therapeutic sources. A spectrum of theoretical influences has been identified,

along with the recognition of the importance of working holistically from managers and practitioners as surveyed by Hackett et al. (2003). Links have been made between the literature and the features of holistic practice suggested by Morrison (2006). However, the task of understanding the practical implications of working holistically requires a practical approach to research and cannot fully be achieved by a review of the literature. Differing opinions regarding what is necessary to achieve holistic work have led the researcher to a broader, more 'holistic' view of what holistic practice could involve; from recognising aspects in a young person's history such as trauma and working on these using creative therapeutic techniques to teaching parents to deliver cognitive behavioural interventions to their children, while others take a more preventative programme into schools and encourage involvement from the wider community. The rest of this study will go on to describe the research undertaken and further findings and recommendations related to the themes identified here and hereafter.

Chapter 3 - Methodologies

Introduction

The Literature Review has illustrated the development of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, but also indicated the divergent meanings and methods of holistic working in practice. As has been stated in the Introduction, the aims of this research were therefore to test the theories proposed by the researcher's Master's Dissertation on meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed; to identify further meanings and implications of working holistically with this client group and to explore practical implications and benefits of undertaking more holistic work with this client group. A definite further aim has been to produce research that is relevant and accessible to professionals.

This chapter falls into three main sections with linking passages. After this introduction, the main guiding principles for the research will be presented. The positioning of the research within a subjectivist paradigm will be explained, with a brief summary of the rejected paradigms of positivism and critical realism. The secondary influence of the philosophy of pragmatism will also be described. Two main methodological strategies were followed throughout this research, namely the use of triangulation from mixed methods to provide data which integrates to frame a wider picture of the area in question; and the secondary use of grounded theory ideas and techniques to generate theory grounded in the data gathered. Finally in this first main section, the methodological implications of operating in a sensitive field will be discussed.

A linking portion will describe the development of the research within these strategies and philosophical influences. The basis from the Master's dissertation and the choices of research participants will be detailed. This will lead to an outline of the two main stages of the research.

The second major section will explore in greater detail the methodological choices within the initial research stage of the internet-based questionnaire study. Introductions to qualitative surveys, the Delphi method and internet surveys will be necessarily brief but will give an overview of the methods used and allow for some explanation of the choices made in this research. Issues around sampling will be introduced, although these will be further discussed in later chapters. Some practical experience from the research will be shared, along with ethical considerations and assurances of data quality using criteria related to validity, generalisability and reliability.

The third major section will present the methodological choices made regarding the later research stage of observation and interviews at a fieldwork placement. This section will briefly introduce theories of ethnography, participant observation, semi-structured interviews and the use of documents. Different sampling issues will be described, along with some practical details from the placement although the team particulars will be described further in the following chapter. A different set of ethical considerations and ways of assuring data quality will be included using the same criteria related to validity, generalisability and reliability.

After this, a linking portion will give a description of the way the data from both stages was combined to provide triangulation for confirmation and completeness. Finally the chapter will include some consideration of the subjectivity of the researcher, and the influences this brought to bear on the research process. This appropriately more personal account will give additional insights into the nature of the research conducted, the particular biases of the researcher and how these were addressed. This will lead into a concluding summary and on to the findings in the next chapter.

Main principles

Research paradigm choices

The choice of research paradigm (Hiles, 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) can be seen as giving an over-arching philosophical orientation to the work undertaken, affecting views of knowledge and what can be known, appropriate methods for inquiry and ways of evaluating the quality of methods and findings. Competition between paradigms or 'Paradigm wars' (Gage, 1989; Guba & Lincoln, 1998) have portrayed different paradigms in opposition to each other with social scientists 'fighting' the case for their view of reality being superior to another's view of reality, even while advocating methodologies which value the subjective views of individuals. Some recent theorists have argued against the opposition of paradigms, proposing solutions such as critical realism (Robson, 2002) or pragmatism (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) which tread a middle path or allow different paradigms to be simultaneously practiced. In order to understand these assertions, a basic reappraisal of paradigm options is required, which necessarily leads to an examination of positivism, post-positivism, constructivism and critical theories.

Guba & Lincoln (2005) revisit basic beliefs of paradigms of inquiry by presenting the ontology (the nature of what exists), epistemology (the nature of what can be known) and associated methodologies of four main paradigms in a table, an adapted version of which appears below:

Table 4. Basic Beliefs (Metaphysics) of Alternative Inquiry Paradigms. Adapted from Guba & Lincoln (2005: p.193).

Item	Positivism	Postpositivism	Critical Theory et al	Constructivism
Ontology (what exists)	Naïve realism – "real" reality which can be known	Critical realism – "real" reality which can be known to an imperfect and probabilistic extent.	Historical realism – virtual reality shaped by society values over time. (ethnic, political, gender etc.)	Relativism – local and specific constructed and co-constructed realities
Epistemology (what can be known)	Dualist/ objectivist. Findings are true	Modified dualist/ objectivist with critical tradition. Findings probably true.	Transactional/ subjectivist. Findings mediated by values.	Transactional/ subjectivist. Findings are created.
Methodology	Experimental/ manipulative. Verification of hypothesis. Chiefly quantitative methods.	Modified experimental/ manipulative. Critical multiplism, falsification. May include qualitative methods.	Dialogic/ dialectical (comparing discussions and communication)	Hermeneutical/ dialectical. (interpretive, exploratory & comparing discussions)

This table presents the different paradigms as separate philosophies which cannot easily be combined since they disagree on such fundamentals as what exists and what can be known. Understandably, different methodologies are indicated by these very different beliefs. Any attempts to cross paradigms or find a holistic strategy which encompasses a range of research methods will necessarily need to address these boundaries.

Positivism and Postpositivism

Simplistic descriptions of positivism may typically be used to highlight what research is not (Flick, 2009; Hammersley, 1995) but this fails to take into account the new progression of postpositivism following what has been described as the death of positivism (Byrne, 1998). Criticisms of positivism in ignoring the influence and limitations of the researcher are addressed by postpositivism which recognises and attempts to mitigate for these shortcomings (Robson, 2002). Positivism is summarised by Bryman (2008) as having several key assumptions:

1) Only phenomena and hence knowledge confirmed by the senses can genuinely be warranted as knowledge (the principle of *phenomenalism).*
2) The purpose of theory is to generate hypotheses that can be tested and that will thereby allow explanations of laws to be assessed (the principle of *deductivism).*
3) Knowledge is arrived at through the gathering of facts that provide the basis for laws *(the principle of inductivism).*

4) Science must (and presumably can) be conducted in a way that is value free (that is, *objective*).
5) There is a clear distinction between scientific statements and normative statements and a belief that the former are the true domain of the scientist.

(p.13)

It can be seen from the table above that postpositivism follows these assumptions less rigidly, with some acceptance of supporting qualitative methods (expanding assumption 1) and recognition of the influence and limitations of the researcher (rejecting the possibility of assumption 4 but seeking to optimise objectivity).

The supposition that what can be 'known' can be measured and demonstrated by scientific methods and experiments is key to methods such as randomised controlled trials which separate out variables, measure outcomes and statistically analyse findings to prove or disprove a hypothesis. These methods might be preferred by those who want to demonstrate 'what works' and gain statistical evidence for the benefits of one treatment method compared to another. However, as has been shown, at this stage definitions of holistic practice are so diverse or vague that the (post) positivistic comparison of 'holistic treatment' with 'standard treatment' or 'no treatment' is unfeasible. It seems necessary to gain a clearer understanding of holistic work with this client group before such trials could be attempted. Even with an agreed definition, the ethics and helpfulness of such trials can be questioned. The use of a 'no treatment' group is widely considered to be unethical in work with sexual offenders (Barbaree, 1997; Marshall et al., 1991) and the absence of standardised approaches with young people who have sexually harmed make comparison studies difficult. Studies comparing the use of Multi-systemic therapy with 'standard' treatment (Henggeler et al., 2009) are interesting but have a very specific focus, and require considerable time and resources. In contrast, subjectivist approaches seek wider understanding of theoretical concepts before considering how generally applicable these concepts may be.

Subjectivism

The over-arching primary research paradigm for this research is identified as subjectivism, in contrast to positivist, postpositivist or critical theory approaches.

Different texts refer to this paradigm as constructionism, constructivism, interpretivism, antipositivism or other titles. In other definitions, subjectivism is presented as a key epistemology which contrasts with positivism (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The clear reference to subjective viewpoints has formed the rationale for using this term, rather than emphasising the constructed nature of reality or the way humans interpret what they see; although these are also key to this paradigm. Subjectivism is primarily useful for exploring areas and ideas, getting close to the subjective experiences and meanings held by the people involved and forming theories and findings by the interaction between the human, subjective researcher and the human, subjective research participants. Subjectivism identifies that 'social reality is the product of meaningful social interaction' (Clarke & Layder, 1994: p.6). What can be 'known' is recognised to be filtered by these fallible and biased individuals, but the value of genuine, complex real-life experience engaged with by one who seeks to understand is central to this paradigm. Quality research within this paradigm will acknowledge and seek to mitigate for these biases, and will make explicit the research methods and choices used in order to give an 'audit trail' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This research focuses on what 'holistic' working means to individuals, and relies on their practical knowledge and experiences to explore the topic and form preliminary theories. The range of meanings found within the literature suggest that there is no empirically verifiable, true or right answer to what is 'holistic', but that seeking a range of opinions among professionals and others could indicate commonly held meanings and reveal underlying assumptions and relevant implications for working with these young people. A reliance on professional consensus has previously been used to guide research in this area (see Hackett et al., 2003; 2006) with this Delphi Study being a key example of a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis as will be described later.

The challenge for subjectivist, qualitative research, particularly in fields such as criminal justice is being seen as valid and relevant, even without 'evidence-based' or statistically significant findings. A key argument could be that this research is usefully reviewing real life practice, rather than a more objective, experimental approach in some kind of controlled conditions. The strength of one well researched case study example can

disprove an entire hypothesis (McCutcheon & Meredith, 1993). Research drawn from qualitative methods has been influential in criminology, as in the significant study into Mods and Rockers by Cohen (1980), credited by Newburn (2007) with bringing the terms 'folk devil' and 'moral panic' into popular terminology. Qualitative methods can be used to illuminate the 'why' in certain findings (Conley, 1994) and others have argued for 'interpretive sufficiency' rather than 'instrumental efficiency' (Christians, 2005). Christians stresses the priorities of representing multiple voices, enhancing moral discernment and promoting social transformation. While these emphases are included in subjectivism, the transformative agenda belongs more completely to the critical theory paradigm.

Critical Theories

The other main paradigm choice which has not been followed in this research is the approach of critical realism, grouped by Guba & Lincoln (2005) under Critical Theories et al. although they also consider a separate participatory paradigm as proposed by Heron & Reason (1997). Critical realism 'concentrates on the nature of society as a whole' (Clarke & Layder, 1994: p.7) and seeks to identify underlying structures which influence people. Critical realist research has a definite agenda of enabling social change and often uses strategies such as action research or critical ethnography which directly involve participants in research decisions. While this research is interested in underlying structures and societal influences, as presented by Durham (2006), the main approach has been one seeking to understand before change can be enabled. The participatory nature of action research, (Lewin, 1946) while appealing in its relevance to professionals and service-users, would have required the committed involvement of participants/ co-researchers from the start which was not available in this research, partly due to time constraints. There would also have been a need to be more democratic in identifying research topics which did not coincide with the researcher's expressed aims and funding provision. However, future research enabling a team to make changes towards a more holistic ideology is readily conceivable within a critical realist paradigm.

Pragmatism

A final epistemology which requires consideration here is that of pragmatism, which is central to the field of Mixed Methods (discussed below) and is gaining recognition within social sciences research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Greenwood & Levin, 2005; Baert, 2005). Pragmatism links theory and praxis (Greenwood & Levin, 2005) and generates truth that is useful to those who use it (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Teddlie & Tashakkori argue that pragmatism is a vital third choice in the constructivism versus positivism debate and a way through the difficulty of opposing paradigms. Pragmatists will use whichever methods, quantitative and/or qualitative, may be useful for accessing data and generating theory that 'works'. This research is influenced by these priorities, particularly in generating useful findings for practitioners. However, the willingness to explore meanings, interpretations and subjective viewpoints is still the overarching research paradigm, and while this might frustrate the pragmatist who prioritises practical theory, this subjectivist paradigm most accurately represents the researcher's orientation.

Triangulation

The focus on 'holistic' as a topic and possible ideal can be seen to apply to research methods as well as the practice being investigated. Noblit & Engel (1991) describe the 'holistic injunction' as being an 'ideal and moral imperative' in qualitative research. They set out how:

> 'The moral force of the holistic injunction admonishes us to be ambitious, to try to learn all, to take all into account, and to tell all.' (p.125)

Their first point, attempting to learn all, leads them to present the theme of triangulation. The concept of triangulation in research links to the task of navigation and the requirement of data from at least two different sources to gain an accurate location. Denzin (1989) distinguished four types of triangulation when approaching social research: data triangulation; investigator triangulation; theory triangulation and methodological triangulation. Initially triangulation was conceived as a way of

validating results from one method by the use of another. Increasingly, it has shifted towards:

> 'further enriching and completing knowledge and towards transgressing the (always limited) epistemological potentials of the individual method' (Flick, 2009: p.444)

In this research, data triangulation and methodological triangulation will be used to take ideas suggested by one or more participants and see if they are repeated across other groups of participants using different research methods. Data has been gathered from observation, documents, questionnaires and interviews. Each of these methods presents particular challenges and weaknesses, but the principle of triangulation seeks to demonstrate validity and a more complete knowledge base. Fielding & Fielding (1986) explain:

> 'Quality control is strongest when our sources are of the most varied quality, because this means that we are most likely to discover systematic bias' (p.91)

The use of in depth interviews can explain and illuminate findings from a more distanced questionnaire. Conversely the use of a questionnaire can survey opinion across a wider range of teams, removing some of the local bias inherent in interviewing staff from one location. The use of observation can compare the theoretical and presented opinions of a participant in an interview with their actions in practice (Silverman, 2000). Conversely the chance to interview a practitioner may illuminate some of their practice decisions and allows their rationale to be better understood. The interviewing of some service-users enables a comparison between what professionals claim to deliver and what is experienced. Additionally the use of documents, both stated policies and procedures and practice records offers further insight into intended and actual practice. Triangulation incorporates this wide range of different methods, and diverse ways of triangulating data, methods and different investigators have become widespread in both qualitative and quantitative research. Richardson & St. Pierre (2005) prefer the image of a multi-faceted crystal to a flat, three-sided object, and the use of multiple sources to reflect and demonstrate complexity has informed this research.

Mixed methods

The recognition of a specific field of Mixed Methods research has grown since the early 1990s, although studies using multiple methods date back much further (for example, Brewer & Hunter (2006) cite the Hawthorne studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939), which combined experiments, interviewing, observation and life history studies). Brannen (2005) charts the rise of mixed methods research including the publication of a Handbook (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) and a new *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* from Sage. She discusses the paradigm challenges posed and how far these are affected by politics and pragmatics. She also considers the differences of conducting simultaneous or sequential designs of mixed method research, and the possibilities of combining qualitative and quantitative methods or combining two quantitative or two qualitative methods (see Morse, 2003; 2008; 2009). Within the Handbook (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Morse, 2003), a combination of two qualitative methods is described as 'multimethod' but Morse (2009) later makes a stronger case that a 'QUAL-qual' design (a main qualitative method followed by a complementing minor qualitative component) should be considered mixed methods, as would the converse 'qual-QUAL' design.

The main core of Mixed Methods work brought together by Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998, 2003) stresses the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and this is central to Bergman's (2008) definition of mixed methods research being:

> 'the combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or program' (p.1)

The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches as a third methodological movement was criticised by Denzin & Lincoln (2005) who claimed:

> 'Mixed-methods designs are direct descendants of classical experimentalism. They presume a methodological hierarchy in which quantitative methods are at the top…'. (p.9)

They went on to criticise how the 'mixed-methods movement' take qualitative methods out of their interpretative framework and decrease the democratic aims of including silenced voices. They end by citing Howe's (2004) opinion that the growing popularity

of mixed-methods with educational researchers is 'an ominous development' (p.57). These criticisms are countered by Teddlie & Tashakkori (2009) who cite examples of work from the Mixed Methods community which contradict each of these assertions. While the use of 'mixed-methods' has been challenged by these authorities in research, the use of 'multiple methods or triangulation' is still seen as a key strategy adding 'rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: p.5).

The choice by Denzin & Lincoln to dismiss mixed-methods seems alarmist and out of keeping with a desire for breadth and depth within research. While they may be more comfortable with a combination of qualitative methods as advocated by Morse (2008; 2009), other mixed-methods research which features a major qualitative component alongside supplementary or preliminary quantitative data collection is still eminently conceivable within an interpretative framework (e.g. quan-QUAL or QUAL-quan studies such as Brannen et al., 2000). The present study has followed a mixed methods design incorporating some preliminary quantitative data collection and supplementary quantitative analysis techniques, while staying mindful of some challenges of combining such methods explored hereafter.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods does present some challenges and can be unsatisfactory when qualitative data is transformed into quantitative data or vice versa (Flick, 2009). Flick is dismissive of attempts to include some free text questions within a survey as a misguided attempt to follow a trend; incorporating qualitative data without using any qualitative principles. He also questions whether generalisation of an interview study by a larger survey is particularly useful, stressing rather the need to justify sampling decisions by what the selected cases represent rather than how many of them were used. Bryman (2008) sees the growth of mixed methods research being due particularly to a willingness among researchers to consider research methods as techniques which may be used across different paradigms as well as increased willingness among feminist researchers to consider some applications of quantitative methods. However, Bryman stresses the need for mixed methods research to be well designed by suitably skilled researchers using appropriate methods and taking care not to dilute the research effort. He summarises by saying that:

> 'Mixed methods research should ideally be more than the sum of its parts', (ibid.: p.624)

bringing to mind again the concept of holism and the need for an integrated approach to methods and analysis.

Adopting a Mixed Methods strategy was considered helpful for this study for both philosophical and pragmatic reasons. The holistic injunction above was combined with a desire to create findings that were more widely applicable across England and Wales while drawing in depth from individual meanings and experiences. A more holistic and balanced view was attempted by inviting a wide range of professionals to share their views in a survey before a more in depth interview and observation study was undertaken to explore further the meanings identified and the practical implications of these. Practically, the breadth survey was also used to introduce the research to a range of teams to identify a suitable placement for the depth study. In this research, the use of mixed or multiple methods is based within an overall subjectivist paradigm; however, elements of pragmatism (upheld by Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, as the primary philosophy for mixed methods) may also be detected in the choices of mixed methods and the preference for practical theory which is useful to practitioners. The choice to use some atypical survey methods within a largely subjectivist paradigm will be discussed later in this chapter.

The use of a number of different methods necessarily impacts time and resources and this can be seen as a disadvantage of the mixed methods approach. No individual method is used to its widest *or* deepest capacity for the sake of generally increasing the breadth *and* depth of coverage (Bryman, 2008). There is also potential for confusion in using methods more traditionally seen within particular strategies such as surveys, ethnography or case studies, as well as the difficult task of balancing and combining a wealth of diverse data. Another disadvantage of a mixed methods approach identified by Denscombe (2007) is that it generally does not 'fit' with emergent research designs such as those that typify grounded theory because the research stages are planned in advance rather than developing as suggested by on-going analysis. It will be seen below how the two strategies were combined in this research.

Grounded Theory

Grounded Theory as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is recognised as a rigorous way of generating theory which is grounded in real data from practice. Key features of the approach are identified as being how it:

- Uses empirical field research as its starting point (the researcher starts the fieldwork research early in the investigation)
- Develops its analysis with constant reference to fieldwork data (an iterative process).
- Produces explanations that are recognizable to the subjects of the research.
- Is geared to modest localized explanations based on the immediate evidence.
- Adopts an emergent design (based on theoretical sampling).
- Generally is linked with qualitative research, exploratory investigations, small-scale studies and research focusing on human interaction in specific settings. (Denscombe, 2007: p.103)

The strengths of a grounded theory approach are very much defined by the way the findings are grounded in the data (and for this reason hard to deny) and should be practical because of their accessibility to the research subjects. The openness of the approach to following up developing ideas allows flexibility in including new participants and avoids any fixed agenda. Further advantages of a grounded theory approach include the recognition of the rigour of the analytical methods used and the increasing respect for grounded theory within the research community (Denscombe, 2007). The secondary use of grounded theory principles and techniques in this research was chosen for the suitability to exploratory studies and the need to build findings which are clearly supported by the data rather than the prior agenda of the researcher. Different agendas of the researcher and practitioners will be discussed at the close of this chapter.

As with many useful theories, grounded theory has developed and diverged into contrasting practices, most starkly indicated by the debates between the original authors who each went on to publish separately and criticise each other's work. Glaser's (1992) book criticised the forcing of categories by Strauss & Corbin (1990) and argued for a more creative emergence of codes and themes but from a neutral distance which led

Denscombe (2007) to label Glaser's the more positivistic version. Subsequent developments by Layder (1998) and Charmaz (2005, 2006) lead some researchers to explicitly define whose version of grounded theory they are using. Charmaz's (2005) emphasis on returning to the Chicago School roots of grounded theory brings out five useful premises for using grounded theory in a constructionist and pragmatist context. She stresses the need to:

- Establish intimate familiarity within the setting(s) and the events occurring within it- as well as with the research participants.
- Focus on meanings and processes.
- Engage in a close study of action.
- Discover and detail the social context within which action occurs.
- Pay attention to language. (pp.521-525)

These five points have been useful in concentrating the data collection and analysis of this study. However, the reasoning given by Charmaz for this reiteration of principles cannot be uncritically accepted. Her location of earlier grounded theory versions within the positivist paradigm appears inconsistent with my reading of the earlier versions (e.g. Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998b) where the authors stress the interpretive nature of grounded theory and firmly reject positivistic positions. Strauss & Corbin (1998b) additionally take up a pragmatist response to the relationship of theory to reality and truth.

Additional debate has considered the growth in studies claiming to use grounded theory when they mean a more general inductive approach using coding (Hood, 2007). The use of the term 'grounded theory' may mean a close observance of the original Glaser and Strauss approach, a strategy designed around another author's version of grounded theory or it may describe a choice of analysis techniques rather than a more over-arching strategy (Gibbs, 2007).

On the question of choosing a version of grounded theory to follow, Flick (2009) proposes an alternative, trying to see:

> 'the common core of methodological approach in the different versions of grounded theory and see the differences in the detail more as alternative ways of how to proceed depending on your research question.' (p.435)

This approach has been used in this study, with further choices being made as suggested by the data and emergent theories. One example is the use of an initial literature review, generally avoided within grounded theory (Denscombe, 2007) but more in line with Layder's Adaptive Theory (1998) which builds on elements of previously known theory (Blaikie, 2010). This study began with literature already considered at Master's level but further literature was added later with particular connection to the four emerging main themes. The research question already directed some study of the history of responses to young people who had sexually harmed and meanings of holistic working but it was important that this was further directed by the emerging findings.

Possible disadvantages of grounded theory approaches include the uncertainty of the direction the developing research will follow (Flick, 2009), and the way that the researcher's interpretation, coding and ownership potentially limits the voices of participants (Bishop, 2005). The organisation of the research stages and the influence of mixed methods principles in this research have addressed this first point, but in doing so have moved away from what might be considered a truly Grounded Theory *strategy*. The influence of grounded theory *methods* will be seen to be more pervasive throughout the main analysis stage of the research while time constraints have restricted the further development of data collection within an on-going iterative process which would have been more typical of grounded theory. The choice of using analysis techniques from grounded theory rather than other types of content analysis, discourse analysis or computer-based analysis seemed relatively straightforward. The data was mainly from interviews and questionnaires which remove most elements of discourse since the interviews are not typical conversations (Flick, 2009). The desire to build new categories and themes from the data ruled out content analysis, although some simple counting of recurrences of codes was used at later stages (Silverman, 2000). Also while a computer was used to aid searching for codes and keywords, the use of software for analysis was considered disproportionate to the anticipated benefits with a relatively small number of interviews which could be more carefully examined manually.

The analysis of the collected data was conducted using techniques spelt out by Strauss & Corbin (1998a) including line by line coding, axial coding, selective coding and the use of

memos and other techniques such as the Flip-Flop technique. Various levels of coding lead to codes or categories being ascribed to portions of data which are later arranged in oppositions around the axis of a category. Journaling or memos allow written exploration of theoretical concepts which can later be reanalysed. The Flip-Flop technique (ibid.) considers the opposite to a concept to find another perspective, for example, survey and interview participants were asked what the opposite of holistic working would look like.

The desire to include the voices of participants will be demonstrated by the use of extensive quotations in later chapters; however, these will necessarily be influenced by the researcher's choices within the analysis. Inclusion of participants in the later analysis process was not possible although the triangulation allowed by gaining feedback from interview respondents on the findings from the internet survey did mediate the total analytic dominance of the researcher.

Sensitive topics

Methodological choices are also affected by the sensitive nature of some research topics, including work with young people who have sexually harmed. Lee's (1993) definition of sensitive research specifies:

> 'Research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it.' (p.4)

While the holistic and theoretical areas of working with this client group are arguably less sensitive than research which focuses on in depth case discussion, the need to protect confidentiality, particularly of any young participants is especially acute. When I visited a residential facility which exclusively accommodates young people who have sexually harmed, the need to keep the nature of their residents' backgrounds secret from the local community was made very clear. Consideration of the nearby nursery raised questions for me about the safety of local children should the young people abscond. Realistically there must be few locations which are very far from a school or nursery and the careful supervision at both locations caused me to reflect on my initial concern, and was instructive in understanding the local challenges for such establishments.

Gaining permission to conduct research is additionally challenging when tackling sensitive topics. Butler's (2002) *Code of Ethics for Social Work and Social Care Research* requires that researchers:

> 'retain a primary concern for subjects' welfare and should actively protect participants from physical and mental harm, discomfort, danger and unreasonable disruption in their daily lives or unwarranted intrusions into their privacy.' (p.245)

The importance of a clear ethical basis to a research proposal cannot be overstated. In this study the ethical approval from the university required consideration of all documentation as well as strict requirements protecting anonymity, the voluntary nature of participation with the free right to withdraw at any time, and suitable protection of recorded and written data. (See Appendices 1 & 4)

In discussing difficulties in gaining access to study HIV/AIDS in the workplace, Alty & Rodham (1998) recommend the strategy of reassuring potential organisations of the confidential nature of the study and offering a report or summary of the research on request once it is complete. They also go on to discuss the contrasting issue of a participant being ordered to take part in the research by her employer for the avoidance of the organisation seeming to have something to hide. In my experience, once I had managed to identify a willing manager, the rest of the permissions fell into place easily. My expectation that wider ethical approval from the local council or Youth Justice Board would be needed proved not to be the case, and the requirements of the university combined with a new Criminal Records Bureau check were considered quite sufficient. Instead the risk seemed to be that practitioners felt obliged to participate, despite my efforts to provide them with free consent, and my presence during observation was with consent from the organisation rather than individuals who might have preferred at times to be unobserved.

Other strategies about conducting sensitive research with adolescents are shared by Hern et al. (1998) who include the need to use adolescent-friendly materials, ensure privacy and to be ready to intervene if 'unhealthy behaviors or concerns are identified;

have backup resources, such as social services, available as needed' (p.185). The adolescent-friendly consent materials used in this study (See Appendices 8-10) made clear the protection of confidentiality as well as the clear proviso that if any information suggested that the young person or anyone else was at risk of harm then the YOT would be informed and the interview recording could be used by the Police. Additional assurances outlined how the focus of the interview would be on their experiences of work at the YOT 'without going into many personal details of why you ended up there' (Information sheet, Appendix 9) and their freedom to choose not to answer any question. The decision was also made not to interview anyone currently receiving intervention treatment from the YOT but to approach only older adolescents (aged 14-19) who had completed any intervention. This limited the sample but ensured that on-going work would not be negatively affected.

Research development

Master's research

A grounded theory approach had already been used effectively within the researcher's Master's study (Hall, 2007). Six professionals from different teams within the field of working with young people who have sexually harmed were interviewed about the meanings of holistic work with these clients. Fictional case vignettes (see Hughes, 2002) were used to enable discussion of realistic cases without the need to share confidential client information. Key themes and questions had been identified through the analysis but the small sample suggested further triangulation and confirmation work was required. Preliminary suggestions of the implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who had sexually harmed deserved much more thorough exploration.

Research participants

During the Master's research the choice to focus on practitioners who work with young people who have sexually harmed was justified by the expectation that these

professionals are the ones who choose intervention methods and have experiences of different work with different young people. The experiences of the service-users and their families and carers, while valuable, are necessarily restricted to the treatment of one individual case. With limited time to complete the Master's research, access to young people and carers was considered unlikely to be achievable; however, the lack of representation of these young people and their views is common and regrettable (Hackett & Masson, 2006). In this main study, the inclusion of the experiences of young people and their carers was considered desirable, and complementary to the main aims of understanding the treatment approaches of professionals. The comparison of the experiences of the young people and carers 'receiving' or 'participating in' holistic intervention processes with those 'delivering' the interventions allows critical evaluation and further insight. However, the majority of research participants were again professionals who work at least part of the time with young people who have sexually harmed. As before, these professionals will have the widest understanding of interpretations of holistic working with this client group. A diverse set of professional participants was sought from statutory and voluntary agency teams and from linked organisations including social work teams, residential staff and therapeutic workers. More details regarding the samples and sampling strategies used will be included below under the separate sections.

Research stages

Building on and testing the Master's findings provided a solid beginning for the research. Two main objectives were to achieve wider generalisability (breadth) for the findings but also to explore more deeply (depth) the practice realities of holistic work. These objectives implied very different directions for the research depending on the priority of breadth or depth, but an aim to achieve triangulation between these contrasting directions was seen as a route to producing rigorous research. Pragmatically it was hoped that approaching a large number of teams within the breadth research would provide maximum opportunities to identify an appropriate fieldwork location for the depth research. This also suggested a progression from the narrow and moderately deep interview study of the Master's research to a wider cross-location generalisability study and finally on to a more targeted depth study at one fieldwork location. These two new

research stages developed into the conducting of an internet-based questionnaire study targeting a national sample of professionals who work with young people who have sexually harmed followed by a fieldwork placement in a Youth Offending Team including observation and semi-structured interviews. The rest of this chapter will give further rationale for these choices and discuss some of the practical and ethical challenges experienced by the researcher.

Breadth study: internet-based questionnaire survey

Qualitative surveys

The use of survey methods to gain qualitative data is included by Oppenheim (1992) although survey methods are generally considered quantitative tools for gathering large amounts of statistically comparable data (Denscombe, 2007). Qualitative questionnaires are described in a number of studies without giving any methodological citations (e.g. Lee, 2001; Davis et al., 2005; Gandhi et al., 2006; Wakefield et al., 2006); instead the qualitative coding and analysis is linked more to analysis of focus groups (Wakefield et al., 2006) or reduced to quantitative percentages (Gandhi et al., 2006). Lowndes (2005) describes the email interview as a distance method of interviewing, rather than a questionnaire, with an emphasis on the good quality of data accessible while being easier to arrange than face-to-face interviews. However, she cautioned regarding the risk of very colloquial or abbreviated responses and the tendency for emails to accumulate or be ignored. The cautions from Flick (2009) mentioned above regarding the tokenistic use of open questions within surveys are addressed to some extent by measures to make the survey more like an interview and the analysis of the majority of responses within a subjectivist, grounded theory framework. For this research, the use of qualitative surveys was chosen to access the widest range of professionals across the UK while allowing the sharing of detailed opinions, meanings and personal experiences. Additionally, the location of the survey within a mixed methods approach does address some of the potential limitations of a questionnaire study.

Delphi method

The Delphi method (Linstone & Turloff, 1975, Skulmoski et al., 2007) consults 'the experts' using an iterative series of questionnaires to gain qualitative data which is then compared using quantitative Likert scales and further qualitative refining. A rigorous combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, the Delphi method is increasingly recognised as an effective research tool within quantitatively dominated fields such as medicine (Jones & Hunter, 1995). This research aimed to complete Delphi cycles of questionnaires, treating the Master's research as the first cycle. However, in practice the third cycle was not attempted due to relatively low response rates and alternative means of refining the results being pursued through the placement observation and interview studies. The iterative nature of Delphi surveys appealed for this research as a way of testing findings and achieving consensus on meanings. In practice this research cannot be described as a Delphi study but the principles described did inform the use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative responses within the survey instrument.

Internet surveys

In considering research methods for surveying a wide range of professionals within constraints to time, travel and expense, an internet-based questionnaire survey was considered to be the most appropriate method. The benefits to this method include the opportunity to approach a very wide sample at low cost (Hewson et al., 2003), the attractive presentation and instant completion and return possibilities (Denscombe, 2007) and the ease of snowballing to new participants without the need to print paper materials. It is environmentally responsible as well as low in cost since it requires no printing, postage or use of physical resources. Additionally, Weisband (1996) and Coomber (1997) both found increased self-disclosure regarding sensitive topics was facilitated by the use of internet questionnaires. Research comparing response rates to email or internet as opposed to paper questionnaires has produced varying results (Sheehan & McMillan, 1999; Kaplowitz et al., 2004) but factors increasing response to internet questionnaires include offering financial incentives, asking for personal

information early in the questionnaire (Frick et al., 1999) and sending personally addressed rather than circular 'Dear all' emails (Chesney, 2006; Joinson & Reips, 2004). Although this research could not offer financial incentives to questionnaire respondents, early personal information questions were used and emails were personally addressed where possible. Additional advice over the use of secure servers (Coomber, 1997) and follow-up emails (Dillman, 2007) was followed and explicit assurances of privacy were made (Joinson et al., 2007); although the use of an obviously trustworthy host site (such as one hosted by the university and recommended by Joinson et al.) was not possible and the survey had to be hosted on the researcher's personal website.

Concerns about the limitations of internet access and the related sampling bias have decreased as predicted by Coomber (1997), since most UK professionals will now have access to the internet at work and/or at home. However, the disadvantages to this method are the requiring of attention to email, which many professionals receive in large amounts, and the confidence or willingness to use the internet for research participation. In terms of validity, the truthfulness of answers to any questionnaire cannot be guaranteed or checked (Denscombe, 2007); however, there have been findings of more honest, less socially desirable responses in electronic surveys rather than pencil and paper surveys (Joinson, 2005). The choices to participate or not, and the assurance of confidentiality perhaps raise the question why anyone would choose to give false information in a questionnaire seeking opinions on working holistically. In any case, the triangulation with other data sources should provide better assurance of validity.

Access to survey sample

I emailed over 200 organisations across the UK with the request that professionals who work with young people who have sexually harmed complete a secure internet based questionnaire. I approached all Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales as well as NSPCC, Barnardo's and other specialist team staff based across the UK and other professional contacts gained from conferences and previous employment. So far as possible, a global sample was attempted, with two follow up emails sent to those who had sent no reply. The use of internet methods allowed a global or census sample

(Dillman, 2007) which aimed to maximise participation. The offer to post materials instead of internet completion was made to all, and the assurance was given that if the contact declined to participate, all requests for assistance would cease. The much smaller responding sample is likely to contain a bias towards professionals who are interested in the topic of holistic work, who feel positive towards research and who are willing to express their opinions. Some of the reasons given by declining participants included being too busy, pressures from work or inspections and in one case having too few clients. However, I do not feel that the responding sample were necessarily less busy or pressured than most since some of the survey submissions were completed well out of normal office hours or mentioned similar pressures.

Survey design

The survey design (Appendix 3) was developed to be attractive, clear, relatively short and not too personal (Dillman, 2007; Bryman, 2008). It asked for basic professional details then participants' own views on holistic working, before a series of statements drawn from previous research were presented, asking participants to rate their agreement from strong agreement to strongly disagreement. Clear instructions asked respondents to complete the survey in this order, attempting to minimise the influence of the statements on the free answers invited to the earlier questions (see order effects, Smyth & Dillman 2008). In this way the aim was to gather new data regarding meanings as well as testing the previous findings. Four supplementary forms invited the participants to comment on three diagrams and the vignettes used in the Master's research, but these were identified to be secondary in importance to the main questionnaire. The decision to keep the main questionnaire a manageable length and increase completion (Denscombe, 2007) was made acknowledging the likelihood that this would reduce responses to the supplementary questionnaires. The questionnaire materials were held on servers using secure socket layers so the information was protected.

Ethical considerations of internet survey

The importance of free consent, the right to withdraw from the study and the assurance of confidentiality have all been mentioned previously, and were stated clearly in the information sheet and at the start of the questionnaire (Appendices 2-3). These are supported by Butler (2002), the Economic & Social Research Council (2005) and the University ethical approval process. The data was also protected by the use of secure socket layers on the internet server (Coomber, 1997). The right of professionals and organisations to privacy was respected by the limited use of two follow up emails, and none if any individual declined to participate. The offer of completing the survey by post or email was taken up by a few participants, but this appeared to be in response to technical difficulties rather than an attempt for greater security. Further exploration of issues relating to informed consent will be addressed under the depth study section below.

Data quality - validity, generalisability and reliability of internet survey

The validity of research is the degree to which it observes or measures what it aims to observe or measure (Bryman, 2008). Within qualitative research, validity particularly involves researcher effects and the way the data is gathered (Flick, 2009) as well as the need to avoid anecdotalism (Silverman, 2000). The data gathered via the internet survey did address issues relating to the meanings of working holistically with young people who had sexually harmed, and the responding sample, while relatively small in number was made up of professionals with direct and valid knowledge and experience of working with young people who have sexually harmed. Early questions in the survey established this direct knowledge and experience. The opportunity was given for participants to define working holistically as well as giving opinions on meaning statements derived from previous research into the topic. The alternative concept of credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) includes ensuring good practice in data gathering and respondent validation which was conducted through the later depth study which also provides the triangulation recommended by Lincoln & Guba. While examples drawn later will be selected to illustrate the findings, the use of grounded theory methods and the purposive

interviewing of participants expected to give alternative opinions helped to combat the risk of anecdotalism.

The wider geographical survey was designed to provide some degree of generalisability to the research findings. Generalisability is the extent to which wider claims may be made on the basis of research (Mason, 2002). This is frequently a difficulty for qualitative researchers due to the small samples used (Bryman, 2008). In this research, broader identification and agreement of key themes by a mix of professionals from across the UK suggests a wider application of the findings than if they had been based solely on the views and experiences of one team. In practice, a larger sample would have been needed to complete further Delphi cycles and give a more thorough cross-section of views, meaning that this part of the study added a more limited degree of generalisability than had been hoped. More issues relating to the importance of generalisability in qualitative research will be addressed in the later section under the depth study.

The reliability of research depends on the accuracy of research methods and techniques (Mason, 2002) or the consistency of a measure of a concept (Bryman, 2008). The use of the internet survey does increase accuracy in terms of recording answers and comparing these. In addition to asking about meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, the question 'What might be the opposite of holistic working and what might this look like?' was also asked to compare responses; using a different prompt to approach the same question. This holds some similarity to using a standardised instrument where the reliability can be tested by comparing responses to questions designed to measure the same thing, although within qualitative research the aim is more to gain a fuller picture than strict compliance to quantitative reliability. Alternative concepts of dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) require careful record keeping and auditing by a research peer. This auditing has not been possible throughout this research and is generally uncommon in qualitative research at this level (Bryman, 2008).

Depth study: observation and interviews at fieldwork placement

Ethnography

The use of ethnography and field-based methods are understandably considered the most effective in truly understanding a culture and getting close to those people who are carrying out the practice being researched. Historically ethnography has been a major method in anthropology, often experiencing a very different society, but it has gone on to be used in urbanization studies in Europe and the USA and more recently a wide range of settings including education, hostels for homeless people and work settings from fish markets to hotels (see for example, Shaffir & Stebbins, 1991). Ethnography typically involves some form of mixed methods, drawing on a range of data including observation, informal and formal interviews and collecting documents or artefacts (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Returning to Noblit & Engel's (1991) holistic injunction above, as well as seeking to learn all, holistic qualitative research should also seek to 'take all into account' and ethnography combines the mixed methods necessary for wide learning with the understanding of social and cultural contexts needed. No other method could claim to get as close to the practical realities and challenges of the work.

The experience of working alongside a team, seeing their daily work and practice challenges was considered the best way to research the practical implications of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed. Later emails to potential and actual survey participants outlined the desire to gain a placement with a team and invited further discussion of the practicalities of this. A period of 3-6 months was envisaged, with attendance at the placement over two days per week. This allowed sufficient time to build contacts and arrange and carry out interviews as well as a chance to observe some cases as the work developed. The two day attendance limited the imposition on the team while providing time to prepare, reflect and keep fieldwork journals. The benefits of allowing some distance from the team and time to reflect did come with the disadvantage of not becoming so easily 'part of the furniture' although a number of team members also worked on a part-time basis.

Observation included time in the main team office with varied participant observation in case discussions and a wide range of meetings. The meetings attended allowed perhaps the least intrusive observation as the attendees frequently included students and other visiting professionals not known to the participants. It is also more acceptable to make notes during a meeting as many others are doing the same. Atkinson (1981) commented similarly on the benefits of note-taking during such occasions, rather than in times of casual conversation. To some extent the research could be considered a case study within an organisation (Hartley, 1994). However, the specific emphasis on working holistically meant that some interesting observations within the organisation regarding workplace morale and concerns regarding sexual exploitation were not fully explored since they were seen to be outside the main focus of this research.

Participant observation

The degree of participation during participant observation has been described as a continuum (Jorgensen, 1989). Four different models of participation have also been outlined; that of complete participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant or complete observer (Gold, 1958). The influence of the overt researcher on the setting observed is recognised by their identification as a participant, to some degree, in what takes place. The role of the student practitioner, although familiar in the YOT setting was different to the observer-as-participant role which I undertook as a researcher. My aim was not to influence the practice of the professionals around me, but to observe and understand their daily activities (Bryman, 2008). While my presence will have affected their actions and interactions, my aim was to minimise this by being unobtrusive, non-judgemental and an interested listener. My background as a practitioner helped me to present myself as a sympathetic, discreet and ethical researcher with good understanding about client confidentiality and child protection concerns. This was instrumental in gaining access to both the placement and encouraging staff to share experiences, as in Dunnighan & Norris (1996) where the background of one of the researchers as a former detective eased access to this study of police and informants. Another similarity with this study is that both pieces of research focused on observing professionals and their conversations about the co-subjects of the research, in their case

the informants and in this study the young people. There are clear limitations of research where direct interaction between the co-subjects is not observed, but observing accounts from police or YOT staff provides meaningful data provided that the framing perspective is carefully considered (Silverman, 2000).

The negative side of this 'insider status' meant that I sometimes was asked to share my more professional opinions on what I had seen at a point where I felt unready to do so or where honesty seemed impolitic. My participation was generally limited to offering to make hot drinks, occasionally answering the phone and taking messages and occasional points of information during meetings.

My presence was explained and announced to the team via email and team meetings, and I was personally introduced to the nearby professionals by the manager. I sought to make it explicit that I would be writing things down, even personal remarks regarding professionals or young people, but that I would keep everything confidential, aside from the obvious child protection caveats (see Appendices 4-5). At times my note-taking drew comment, but I chose to keep my purpose fairly open rather than trying to remember things to write them down privately afterwards (c.f. Ditton, 1977). Although it felt odd, hearing myself introduced to new staff members as someone who writes things down, so they should mind what they say, and even odder to write down my response to this, I took it in good humour and believe that the overall impression I received of the team was not atypical. While responses to some telephone calls and news were at times perhaps toned down for my benefit, the reactions and emotions were still evident. My access to client notes and computer records helped to fill in the general picture.

Semi-structured interviews

In addition, semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2008; Denscombe, 2007) were successfully arranged with internal and external professionals, two lay panel members, two service users and a parent. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow some focused discussion of issues to do with holistic working as these were only implied during observation. Qualitative interviews of this kind are seen as particularly

appropriate in uncovering meanings of phenomena to those interviewed (King, 1994). The aim to provide comparable data suggested the use of an interview schedule (Appendices 13-16) but this was not rigidly followed, with freedom to follow interesting tangents (Gillham, 2005). The interview schedule for professionals began with similar requests to the survey, asking for basic professional details and fresh views on holistic working. The later part of the interview presented a framework with four key themes drawn from the questionnaire study: seeing the whole young person; working with wider family and peers; working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. Interviewees' opinions on each area and the implications and challenges of each area in practice were sought, followed by some final questions around other areas of disagreement within the research so far; including the primacy of evidence-based practice, the desirability of residential treatment and the need to target interventions. The interviews with professionals were similar to Flick's 'Expert Interviews' (Flick, 2009: p.165) with some limits from time pressures, potential for side-tracking off the main topic and a need for considerable expertise from the interviewer.

During the interviews I generally drew on my experience as a practitioner, identifying with the professionals and encouraging them to talk to me without needing to explain everything as to an uninformed student. At times a degree of assumed naïveté was helpful in gaining their definitions of concepts, but generally I sought to engage them as an informed practitioner, asking them to 'raise their game' to consider issues and discuss them in a deeper way. Frequently I asked participants to give examples of what they meant or to talk about practical challenges they faced, seeking relevant data and deeper understanding.

Challenges of participant research

Choices within participant research include how far interviews are seen as giving access to 'experiences' or 'narratives' (Silverman, 2000). The decision to analyse responses in a more direct, grounded theory way did limit the consideration of the way narratives were constructed by participants or of the power relations within discourses. This was appropriate for this study which focused on practice and meanings rather than seeking

to reveal deeper motivations or organisational structures. Research with a different focus could analyse the same material very differently.

While some aspects of confidentiality seemed very obvious and were agreed in writing, other questions continued to be posed throughout the research. My aim to keep the location of the research confidential did not completely release practitioners to speak freely as certain professionals knew they might be recognised by others in the organisation since they might be the only professional who would be described by their particular profession. The agreement from the YOT management for me to interview staff did not cover all the professionals within the YOT, some of whom were on secondment from other employers. On two occasions interviews needed to be rearranged once the consent form was offered and interviewees were asked to confirm that they had permission to participate.

The confidentiality of the young people themselves was vital, but a later issue arose as to whether to present any of the young people as anonymised cases. While confident in my ability to protect the young people from ever being identifiable, I still faced doubts about the ethicality of presenting a true case example in such a format that it could be used within training or by the media. I gathered anonymised information on individual young people to be able to give pen portraits in the research but eventually decided that the value of presenting a true case example did not justify the use of the information when the young people were not expressly asked to give permission for their details to be used in this even anonymous way.

Documents and secondary data

The use of available documentation is typical within ethnography, 'from the 'informal' to the 'formal' or 'official' ' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: p.123). To ignore this data is to pass up a range of opportunities to understand better the culture being studied and to triangulate other findings. Within the YOT, available documents included policies and procedures both in paper form and stored on the shared computer drive, case notes and reports as well as entries on the 'Careworks' database and papers from meetings

attended. I anonymised 'Careworks' contacts relating to three relevant young people and analysed these along with interview transcripts. I also kept copies of relevant non-client based circulated emails and reports. While I made notes from personal files relating to individual young people I did not take copies of client-based materials as the task of fully anonymising these was too labour intensive. My care in removing all mentions of first names as well as surnames, school names and all references to locality was considered excessive by some staff members but I considered it necessary to fully protect confidentiality of young people and the team, and to present my professionalism as a researcher.

Additionally I requested an overview of cases open to the YOT to ascertain what proportion of young people seen by the YOT had sexually harmed others, and whether this group differed from their clients as a whole in factors such as age or ethnicity. Following this request I gained access to a large dataset listing all offences covered by the Police area for the previous three years, with offence results (such as reprimand or prosecution); age, gender, ethnicity data for the young people and additional information about the areas where they lived, educational status and previous offending. While the full scope of analysis possible from this data is outside the remit of this research, an overview of the client group will add to contextual information (Gorard, 2003) and may contribute to the understanding of the holistic needs of the young people. This data is clearly of a quantitative nature and outside the subjective, meanings focus of the research but appropriate within a mixed methods strategy.

Access to placement and sample issues

This next section takes a step back to describe the selection of the placement and issues relating to the sample used. Several potential placement opportunities were explored following contacts made during the survey study. The most local team had previously employed me and would have been difficult to research sufficiently objectively. Other teams were considered too far away to enable the necessary regular attendance. Another voluntary agency team was visited in the early stages but other commitments on the team led them eventually to refuse the research placement. While a considerable

number of voluntary agency teams do work with young people who have sexually harmed, the non-statutory nature of the work had also led to the question of whether this team would have offered the most representative picture of work across the UK. A YOT placement was considered preferable since these teams have the remit to work with all young people in England and Wales who have been charged with sexual offences, even though sometimes the therapeutic work involves input from other agencies, including voluntary agency teams. However, this did necessarily reduce the access to knowledge regarding young people who have sexually harmed but not been found guilty of an offence. Some of these young people are considered by the YOT's Assessment and Early Intervention Panel, and are included in the Police dataset accessed, but others under the age of ten do not gain access to any YOT resources.

Any placement would have presented advantages and disadvantages in terms of the range and number of relevant young people seen by the team. More rural Youth Offending Teams tend to have fewer staff, cover a wider geographical area and may see comparatively few young people who have sexually harmed within their overall smaller caseloads. The largest Youth Offending Teams have more staff and relevant cases and the possibility to create specialist teams as in Birmingham or the connected Youth Offending Teams in Greater Manchester. While these teams might have presented more relevant data, the atypical size and resources would have given a less generalisable experience across England and Wales as a whole. Scotland and Northern Ireland do not have the YOT systems so the research is less immediately generalisable to teams working in these areas. For these reasons a placement in a mid-sized YOT in a medium sized city in England was considered on balance a representative choice, and management who were open to research and helpful in facilitating wide access allowed the placement to take place. This openness and interest in the research in comparison to responses from many other contacted teams indicates that the management and key professionals in the placement YOT may not be representative of teams across England and Wales.

Ethical considerations at fieldwork placement

Overall ethical approval for the research placement was gained from the University (see Appendix 4) and included the protection of the client and workers' confidentiality, gaining permission from outside agencies, gaining informed consent from young people and carers and issues regarding accidental disclosure. With the assistance of the Youth Offending Team a new Criminal Records Bureau check was undertaken to assure the team that the researcher had no convictions which would restrict her from working with children. Confidentiality was assured by the use of codes instead of names of all people and locations and the secure storage of data. The issue of consent during interviews was clearly addressed by the use of consent forms and information sheets designed to be easily accessible to the users (Butler, 2002) (see Appendices 8-10), and the use of music vouchers as an incentive for young people to participate was agreed as appropriate by the organisation. The two young people interviewed were sixteen and eighteen years of age and additional parental consent was considered unnecessary for the adult and unadvisable for the sixteen year old following consideration from the young person's social worker. This young person was in the care of the local authority and their consent was considered sufficient since an insistence on parental consent may have had negative consequences for the young person and his right to participate (Coyne, 2010). Both young people would have additionally been considered Gillick competent (NSPCC, 2009; Gillick v. West Norfolk & Wisbeach, 1985) to make their own decisions although this legislation is generally only applied to young people under sixteen.

The consent for observation was more generally granted by the organisation rather than individuals. To some degree this was necessary as it was impossible to gain consent from all individuals involved; however, the need to be respectful of workers and clients' preferences was an on-going concern within the research. It was agreed that no direct work with clients would be observed, and interviews would only be attempted with young people who had recently completed work with the YOT. While more direct observation would have added to the understanding of holistic working in practice this was considered potentially disruptive to the on-going client relationship. An early ruling-out of this type of observation eased the ethical approval process and assured the

YOT that the placement could not be considered in any way detrimental to the young people.

Measures were put in place with regard to accidental disclosure to the extent that confidentiality was assured in all cases unless child protection concerns were identified. In this unlikely (and non-occurring) event, information would have been passed to the YOT management and the consent forms had made clear that this would have happened and that the interview recordings could have been used by the Police. The possibility of the interviews being upsetting for young people and parents was also taken into account as part of the consideration of their welfare (Butler, 2002) and the presence of a chosen individual was assured to allow support and 'debriefing' after an interview had taken place. The decision to focus on less personal aspects of the experience of attending the YOT also reduced the risk of negative impact on participants.

Data quality - validity, generalisability and reliability of fieldwork placement

The validity of the observation data is affected by the presence of the researcher, and this will be considered in a later section. It cannot be assumed that the actions and interactions of the staff necessarily typified daily practice, although some of this will have been seen. Although the observation data represents the work of the team, not all of this will be relevant to the topic of working holistically, although an overview of practice can be considered as to how holistic an approach is generally taken. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed further more valid inquiry into the more specific topic of holistic working and the overall triangulation between data sources was part of a strategy to gain the most valid findings.

Previously described concerns for credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and avoiding anecdotalism (Silverman, 2000) were also very relevant for the consideration of the data quality from the observation and interview study. While the interviews confirmed and increased credibility for the survey findings, there was no opportunity for respondent validation following analysis of the placement findings. Again, the main source for

validity of the findings was the triangulation offered by the mainly complementary findings from the observation and interviews. Purposive sampling of interviewees by choosing staff members expected to contribute alternative and perhaps negative views was undertaken (Silverman, 2000). Some contrasting opinions are included in the research to broaden the view of holistic practice and simultaneously avoid anecdotalism but these views were rare despite encouragement to share openly or to "go ahead and be controversial, please". Other threats to validity in qualitative research involve researcher and respondent biases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) which will be addressed in the section on subjectivity below.

Generalisability of the YOT experience cannot be assumed as has been stated above, and the strengths of this part of the research include how it focused closely on a specific situation around specific individuals. While the national requirements and set-up of YOT teams is designed to be standardised, every team is different and observation here was unique to the particular team. For these reasons the specific findings from the observation and interviews need to be considered within the local context and triangulation from the wider breadth study is helpful. There is also an argument that generalisation is not a key aim of qualitative research. Although there are alternative criteria of legitimacy such as transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), Bryman (2008) sets out a different understanding of generalisation, including his emphasis on generalising to theory rather than to populations:

> 'It is the quality of the theoretical inferences that are made out of qualitative data that is crucial to the assessment of generalization'. (p.392)

While the experiences within the YOT cannot be expected to be representative, the theoretical findings, taken in conjunction with other supporting literature aim to be applicable to wider contexts, for example in considering work with parents of other young people who have offended. Further research would of course strengthen these theories but they are offered as concepts which may be useful to professionals and policy makers rather than as a representation of generalisable truth about all YOT situations.

The use of a field journal and transcribing interviews introduce further researcher effects in mediating the data gathered, and these effects on reliability also need to be considered. The sole researcher loses the opportunity for re-transcribing or re-coding data but does not face the problems of consistency between fellow researchers and the subsequent need for increased procedural reliability (Flick, 2009). While the offer to share interview transcripts with interviewees was made, this was not taken up and so this form of member-checking was not possible. The transcribing was completed by the researcher; however, the later interviews were transcribed after some time had elapsed, removing some of the ease of data interpretation (Gillham, 2005). Replication of the research in another setting could be facilitated by the use of similar research instruments and analysis techniques, and efforts have been made to ensure transparency through descriptions of methods and inclusion of interview schedules (Appendices 13-16), later presentation of analysis stages and a reflexive stance (Bryman, 2008).

Triangulation and linking of data

In conducting mixed methods research, the task of linking data from different methods is crucial to the development of robust findings. Fielding & Fielding (1986) describe how the additional review of quantitative data 'includes correcting the "holistic fallacy" that all aspects of a situation are congruent' (p. 27) and they give an example of how survey data of low-ranking instructors illuminated findings from an interview with one more senior officer. Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008) stress the need for a suitable design as well as rigorous methods combining and interpreting the findings of a mixed methods study. They suggest that pre-requisites for strong inferences are the gathering of quality data by standards applied to both the quantitative and qualitative data; quality analysis at both stages of drawing out theoretical findings and finally a stage of integrating the findings from both components of the research.

The design of this study has been described above and incorporates a range of components within two main sections. The breadth study was designed to combine qualitative and quantitative data within the same survey instrument (see Appendix 3).

Within Morse's (2003) typology the breadth study alone could be seen as a QUAN-QUAL instrument, while the depth study combined observation and interviews in a more QUAL-QUAL fashion. Overall the breadth survey was the more minor, introductory phase of research leading to an overall design that could be described as quan-QUAL although this does not reflect the qualitative findings of the breadth survey. Complicated though it may appear, the research design as a whole might be most accurately described as quan+qual > QUAL+QUAL. The additional use of some quantitative methods in analysing the later qualitative data increases the mixed methods influence.

Data triangulation was undertaken as the most popular quantitative survey statements were compared with the earlier qualitative responses given to questions about the nature of holistic work, and what the opposite of holistic work might be. The developing threads of a definition of holistic working were later compared with open responses to similar questions within the interviews. Finally the interviewees were asked to comment on the four emerging themes and expand these by considering the related benefits and challenges from each area. Findings from the interviews illuminated some responses to the survey, as will be seen in later discussions about understanding of the term 'evidence based practice'. Findings from the observation undertaken were also used to develop the four themes and to identify other additional areas of relevance. An example of the development of one of the themes and the methods used for analysis and triangulation will be included towards the end of chapter four.

In terms of data quality, the quantitative data gathered was limited due to the smaller than hoped number of participants. This led to the preclusion of statistical analysis methods which might have been necessary to provide sufficient quality of quantitative data desired by Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008) and sought by O'Cathain et al. (2008) in their review of Mixed methods studies. While the design of the study is emphatically mixed methods, in execution the quantitative data gathered is of a comparatively rudimentary nature. The data was still valid and added useful triangulation to the preliminary qualitative data, as well as to the later main qualitative study. Brannen (2005) and Morse (2008, 2009) would still term this research mixed methods, and might

consider the depth study itself to comprise mixed methods research. However, the size or quality of the quantitative component (see Bergman, 2008) is less than had been anticipated in the design, which might lead some theorists to conclude that the research, while mixed methods in design (quan-QUAL), was actually multimethod (qual-QUAL) in practice.

Subjectivity and researcher effects

Awareness of subjectivity

As has been described, the subjective nature of research and the fallible, biased human beings involved require attention to be paid to the effects of the researcher, and the need to be reflective about the influence and identity of the researcher within the setting and the data collection (Mason, 2002). The use of a field-work journal (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) was vital in collecting personal feelings and responses as well as a running record of activities. Writing at all stages, including memos during analysis and think-pieces on the research process can itself be part of the analytic process (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). Also, returning again to Noblit & Engel's (1991) holistic injunction above, they stress the importance of 'telling all' by presenting ethnographic accounts, using the first person and demonstrating awareness of our own being and thinking.

Robson (2002) sets out the need to use reflexivity to identify areas of potential researcher bias, including awareness of personal issues and value systems, role conflicts and the interests of gatekeepers. He suggests keeping a check on feelings which could suggest a lack of neutrality and ways of stepping back to judge your level of submersion in the fieldwork setting and help in re-framing any blocks. Other researcher considerations include relations in the field (Silverman, 2000) and the way researchers need to combine being non-judgemental with requests to give feedback. Key themes from the fieldwork journal relating to the methodology and the researcher effects are summarised below.

My own agenda(s)

I was very conscious at times about coming in with my own agenda including my own personal theories about holistic working, albeit drawn partly from previous research. I recognised the need to check myself when I was pleased when someone confirmed my theories or agreed with me as it was important not just to see what I wanted to see. I was particularly conscious about spotting and bringing in ideas related to dramatherapy and the necessity of clinical supervision which are personal concerns of mine. Other strong influences to recognise included my own past as a practitioner with this client group and time spent working in residential care. While all researchers bring their own prior experiences and preferences to their research, the open acknowledgement of these and explicit awareness during the data collection and analysis should increase transparency and reduce the effects of bias. Further consideration of these biases and researcher effects will be included at the end of each chapter containing findings and analysis.

The staff agenda(s)

It was also quickly evident that I was being directed towards some personal agendas of the staff at the YOT. These still counted as relevant findings but the bias was noticeable and at times I felt slightly over-influenced about links to sexual exploitation and the need for research on that. I also felt aware of agendas around the need for more emphasis on victims and families and how some people tried to influence me in these directions. It was important to see that while these are valid themes in my research I needed to recognise the subjective influences. Finally there was something of an agenda around the main YOT building and complaining about it, even to the extent that I felt one young person may perhaps have been primed to say something negative about the building in his interview with me. I know from my own experience as a residential worker that a complaint from a service-user is sometimes acted upon more quickly than from a member of staff. While the dissatisfaction with the building was real and widespread, the question about whether young people needed to complain for changes to be made could indicate the lack of confidence from staff that their own opinions are

heard and valid. There was also perhaps some misunderstanding about the focus and aims of my research.

How they saw me

I was aware at times of being seen as a critic, an academic or an expert in the field, and how I contributed to these appearances. Each of these roles had particular meanings and influences. Even a silent observer may be perceived as negatively critical, as the balance between being critical, meaning informed and analytical, rather than critical, suggesting knowing better or negative regard was complex. On a few occasions I contributed comments based on academic knowledge which I afterwards feared presented myself as esoteric or trying to be intellectually superior which could have interrupted rapport. Additionally, presentation by others as an expert in the field who could share helpful insights sometimes put me in the role where I was asked to support case decisions in a way that felt uncomfortably beyond my remit. At times I felt like people saw me as nosey, naïve or annoying, while at times I probably overestimated the influence I was having, feeling like individuals hated me or were speaking quietly to express negative opinions about me. Here my previous experience as a therapist led to some interesting self-reflection and analysis about the transference and counter-transference within the research situation. Another area relevant to the way I was seen by the staff was the measure to which I contributed, as will be discussed below.

How I saw the staff

At times I felt very critical, and tried to moderate this, while at other times I felt protective of them as fellow practitioners and was perhaps unwilling to be objectively critical. The right balance was difficult to find. Their requests to me to give opinions and feedback or reassure them or be interesting or gossip-worthy put me in a difficult position at times. My attempts to avoid giving feedback or being critical sometimes appeared like a "cop-out" (Wolcott, 1990: p.59) and I tried to reflect honestly while keeping a positive attitude. Later questions were easier as my findings were becoming clearer and I could generalise more effectively about what the team had shared.

How I saw the young people (or didn't)

My general distance from the young people and limited contact with them meant I tended to see them rather more as case studies than real people, although I wasn't always aware of this. At the end of the placement I had a slightly sad realisation that although this was probably common in research, seeing them as fictional case studies and discussing them quite hypothetically, while protecting me and my emotions, wasn't really in keeping with the holistic aims of the research. It may be that the case management system encourages this in the other professionals as well, particularly for the managers or case-workers' views of their colleagues' young clients.

When/how I contributed or intervened

This was another key process issue for me throughout the placement as I negotiated and defined my role in the team, and is relevant to how far I was an observer-as-participant or participant-as-observer. I wanted to be helpful to contribute to building a good rapport and gaining good data, but I didn't want to change too much or say too much that might unduly influence the setting. I had dilemmas about whether to answer the phone or not, whether to share things I had learned at some other meetings and what to pass on from my own ideas, things I remembered or a confidential print out I found.

Summary

This chapter began by describing the over-arching paradigm of subjectivism which has been clearly illustrated by these recent points regarding the effects of the researcher and the subjective influences introduced by the researcher and the participants. All stages of the research process are influenced by the chosen paradigm, from strategies to particular research methods and the ethical and quality considerations. The choice of subjectivism with some use of pragmatic philosophy led to the use of a range of mainly qualitative methods within a multiple methods strategy, and the use of grounded theory principles

and methods for data collection and analysis. The practicalities of combining data from the mixed sources will be demonstrated further in subsequent chapters, but the importance of this triangulation as a strategy for gaining valid data has been explained.

The multiple methods used, principally internet survey, participant observation and interviewing have been introduced within these strategies, and some of the practical challenges and limitations of these methods have been explained. In each case the impacts of these limitations will be reduced by the combination with other methods, although the use of multiple methods has split the researcher's focus and time preventing the greater depth or breadth of data that a larger single method study might have offered. However, the appropriateness of using multi-faceted but connected 'holistic' research strategies to explore 'holistic' working has also been presented.

Ethical considerations of working in a sensitive field have been discussed both at a general level and within each of the two main studies. Some responses to the sensitivity and need to protect participants were built in to the research methods used, including the use of information sheets and consent forms, the protection of participant confidentiality and the secure gathering and storage of data. Other responses developed during the work have been mentioned such as the need for balance between criticism and protection, observing and intervening and encouraging participation while leaving freedom to decline. Dilemmas about the use of anonymised client data, the influence of staff and researcher agendas and the role of the researcher will all be explored in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Similarly some factors influencing data quality in terms of validity, generalisability and reliability have been included in so far as they were part of methodological choices and were built into the research design. These concepts will be revisited in greater detail in later chapters following the presentation and analysis of the data findings. Since the general strategies of using relevant methods to gain quality data have now been described, the next chapter will focus on presenting the data findings generated using these methods while the analysis and further discussion of the findings in the light of the methodological, ethical and quality issues raised here will follow in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4 – Opening Results and Findings

Introduction

The findings section of this thesis will be presented within the following six chapters. First this summary chapter will describe the research participants, placement setting and the various sources of data gathered. The analysis of the breadth survey will be shown to yield four main themes, which were supported and developed through the depth study within the Youth Offending Team. An example will be given of the analysis process which was used to explore each of these themes. The four themes will each form subsequent findings chapters which address seeing the whole young person; working with wider family and peers; working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. A final discussion and analysis chapter will consider the interconnectedness of these themes, related challenges and implications and will lead on to recommendations which can be made from this research.

Breadth survey

Survey sample – respondent demographics

A global or census sample, including all members of the relevant population was attempted (Dillman, 2007) since the number of professionals working with young people who have sexually harmed is quite small. Follow up contacts were made by email and in some cases by telephone although these were limited to two per recipient to respect privacy. Regrettably the survey generated a low response rate even after these follow up attempts and more recent research (e.g. Yetter & Capaccioli, 2010; Greenlaw & Brown-Welty, 2009) suggests that paper surveys or mixed method surveys may achieve better response rates from professionals. The respondents to the survey were self-selecting, and thus likely include more individuals who have a particular interest in holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. The twenty-four participants

were all professionals with varying levels of experience of working with this client group. The majority had been in their current work position for between three and eight years, with two long serving participants (12 and 20 years in post) and three newer recruits. Just under half of the respondents classed themselves as social workers, while a third of respondents were managers. The remaining respondents classed themselves as therapists (five participants) and probation officers (two participants), see Appendix 17. Respondents came from a wide geographical area across England and Wales. Just over half the respondents were employed by Local Authorities, mostly within Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) while just under a quarter were employed by Voluntary agency teams. The remaining respondents were employed by the NHS (two participants) or private specialist agencies (two participants) while one was self-employed. Around half the participants spent the majority of their working week with young people who have sexually harmed while five respondents spent less than one hour per week with the client group.

Just over two thirds of participants were women and the majority of respondents were white, with two black or black British participants and two participants of mixed heritage. The above average representation of women is typical for work within public services (Office for National Statistics, 2010a), and the ethnic diversity is approximately representative of England and Wales except that there were no Asian participants (UK census data, 2001 suggests 4% Asian see Office for National Statistics, 2010b). Most respondents were spread quite evenly between the ages of 30 and 60 with one younger and two older participants.

The balance of YOT responses and other services is similar to that gained by the Hackett et al. (2003) mapping study of services, and the large number of respondents with a social work background also mirrors this earlier study. The varying proportion of workload spent on sexual harm cases is another similarity with this larger study, although more personal respondent demographics were not reported by Hackett et al. Although the number of respondents was lower than anticipated, the sample seems relatively diverse in geographical area and age while being suitably representative in terms of gender, background, team type and experience.

Survey responses to holistic descriptors

In addition to quantitative demographics data, further quantitative data was gathered in respect of eleven statements describing holistic working derived from the researcher's Master's study (Hall, 2007), included below:

s1) Working holistically means having a broad perspective - seeing the whole young person.

s2) Working holistically means working with the young person's family as well as with the individual.

s3) Working holistically means having a multi-agency partnership approach rather than one agency.

s4) Working holistically means identifying and tackling wider social systems issues.

s5) Working holistically means using creative and alternative treatment techniques.

s6) Working holistically means delivering wider preventative work as well as working with individuals.

s7) Working holistically means staying focused on the referring incident or offence.

s8) Working holistically means using only evidence-based methods.

s9) Working holistically means including addressing the young person's own victim experiences.

s10) Working holistically means being flexible about boundaries around attendance and co-operation.

s11) Working holistically means connecting and communicating well with family & other professionals.

(N.B. Statements 7 and 8 were presented in reverse format – the Master's participants had expressed the opposite views).

Respondents were asked to state their agreement with each statement on a five point scale, choosing either: Strongly Agree, Agree, Ambivalent, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Additionally, participants were asked to select four statements they considered to be the most important in defining holistic work with young people who have sexually harmed. The responses to each statement are shown by the coloured bars in the graph below, with the number of times each statement was chosen to be among the four most important indicated by the central silver bars. The statements are arranged to represent the level of agreement from the most to the least.

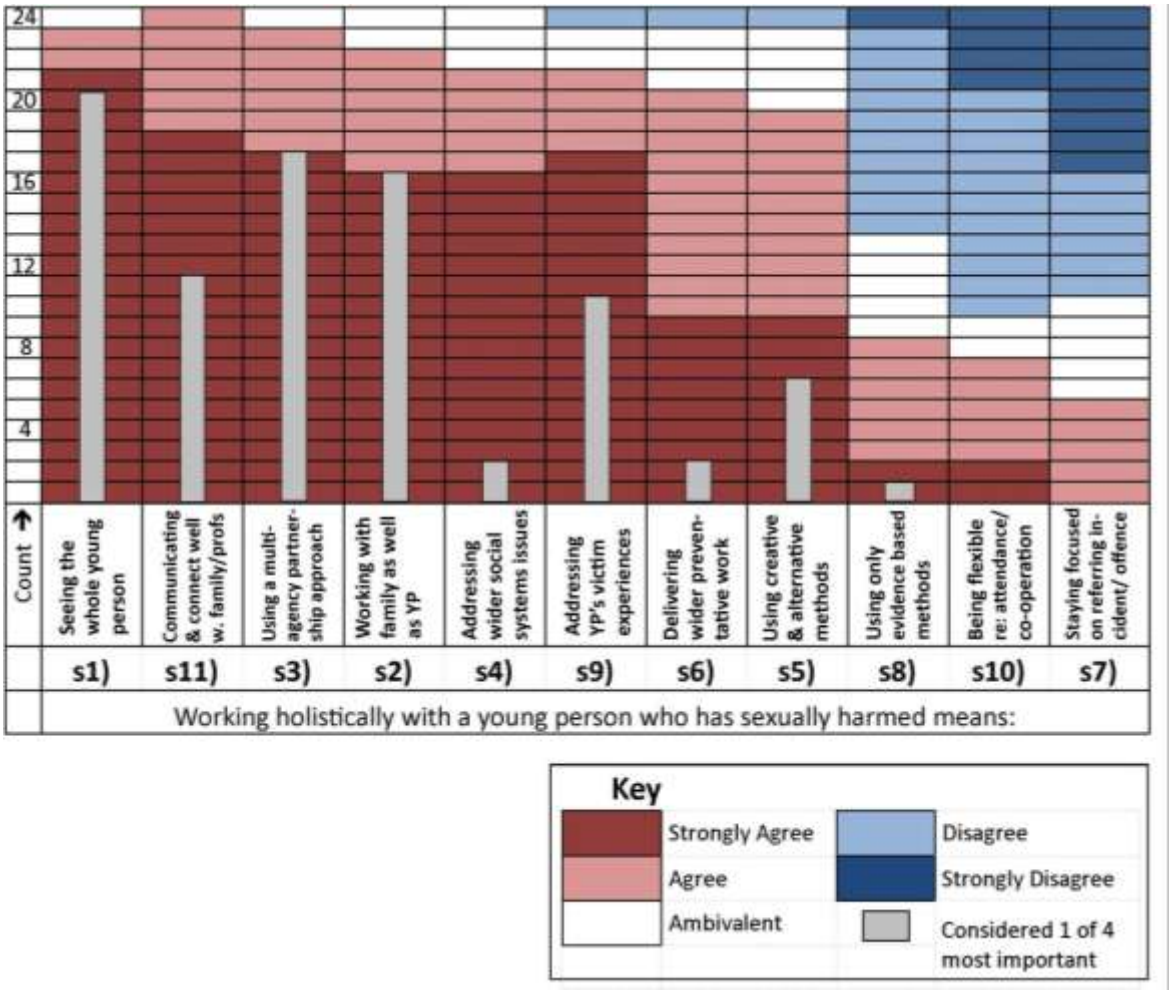

Figure 3. Graph Showing Agreement with Holistic Descriptors

Statement 1 about seeing the whole person was seen as the most important, being selected by 20 participants. Statements 2 and 3 about family and multi-agency involvement were also frequently selected, with only one or two ambivalent responses (two clarified that family participation is sometimes unhelpful in the case of abusive history).

Statements 9 and 11 were identified frequently as being among the most important. Statement 11 about communicating well with others received agreement or strong agreement from all participants. Statement 9 about including addressing a young person's own victim experiences also attracted a very positive response. In considering distinct themes, it could be argued that addressing victim experiences is a significant

part of seeing the whole young person. Similarly, good communication with family and other professionals can be seen as included in family and multi-agency involvement.

A further distinct theme is raised by Statement 5 about using creative or alternative techniques, which was rated particularly important by 6 participants. However, four of the participants were ambivalent and one (a clinical psychologist) disagreed with the statement. Statement 8 about evidence-based methods can also be seen to be related to this theme, attracting the widest range of responses from strong agreement to strong disagreement. Statement 7 about staying focused on the referring incident or offence received the strongest disagreement, with respondents rejecting the idea that holistic work implies an abuse-specific focus. The prominence of the four distinct main themes was then compared with responses to open questions within the survey.

Qualitative Analysis of Open Questions Regarding Holistic Working

Examining the survey answers to questions about whether the respondent's team work holistically, what it means to work holistically and how the team could be more holistic revealed strong support for the first three statements (although these questions were posed before the statements were presented). One YOT manager wrote (20):

> "Yes [we work holistically] – seeing the young person as a whole – not just their offending behaviour – working with family/carers closely and all other agencies involved to have a coordinated approach – to prevent duplication or missing pieces of [work]".

A clinical psychologist defined holistic working as (8):

> "Not just looking at one problem area and applying a single intervention, but looking at all the factors that affect the general wellbeing of the person".

The importance of not limiting the work to a solely abuse-specific response was mentioned by many respondents who presented holistic working as a much wider approach. Within the questionnaires, no explicit mentions were made of the importance of addressing the young people's own victim issues; while communication was only raised as something that could be improved. However, the need for creative and

alternative treatment responses was raised several times. One voluntary agency team manager stressed the need (3):

> "to provide a sensitively designed approach to help assess the child and the context in which they live".

An independent therapist explained the aim (7):

> "to work with all the issues a young person brings in whatever ways help them to understand and resolve those issues."

A contrast was made between the statements which elicited agreement as important when presented to participants, and the areas given prominence by the participants themselves in response to open questions. This supported the selection of the 'using a range of creative methods' as a main theme, while the areas of communication and victim issues were included within the other main themes of multi-agency working and seeing the whole young person.

Selective coding and thematic analysis from these same open questions raised keywords and themes which predominantly fell within these four emerging themes. Specific mention should be made of focusing on strengths, positives and protective factors, which can be considered within seeing the whole young person and their family and peers but was particularly stressed by at least six respondents. Other issues which perhaps are not covered by the four main themes include the needs of victims outside the family which were mentioned as part of a definition of holistic by one individual but also elsewhere by others. The safety of the public is another wider issue which was mentioned by one respondent. The problems of a time limit and the need to find out why harm occurred were also mentioned by one respondent each. Finally one respondent particularly stressed the importance of meeting the needs and risks identified after a comprehensive assessment which usefully raises the issue of the need to target work and whether holistic necessarily means doing everything possible. However, mentions by individuals did not present themes large enough to affect the emergence of four main themes, as shown below.

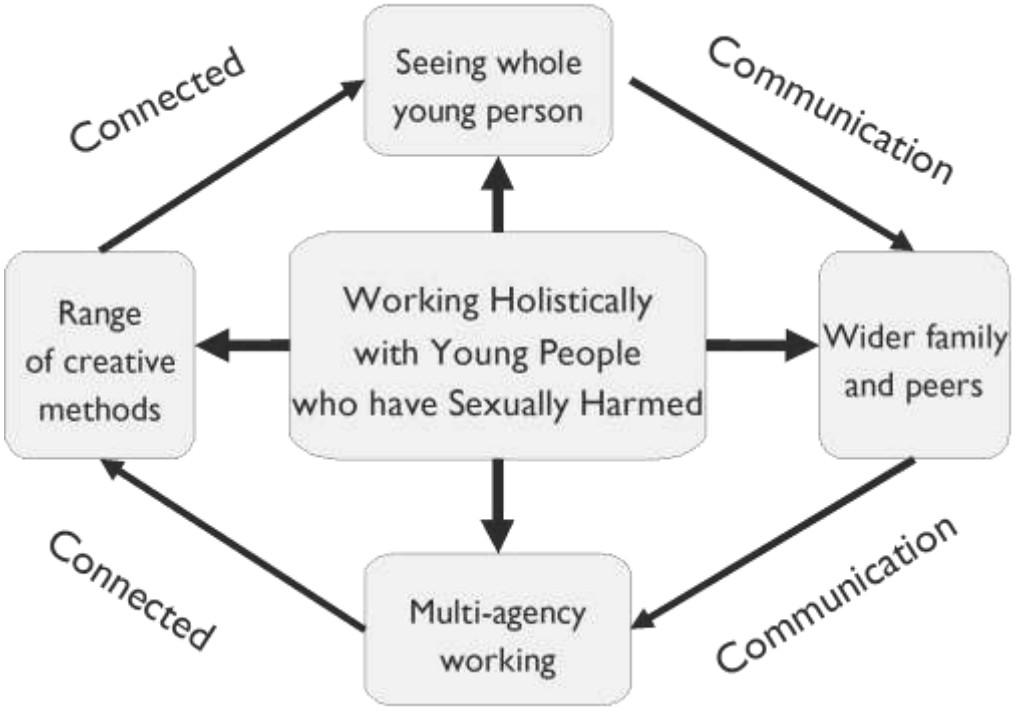

Figure 4. Main Themes of Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

This diagram was created to present the four emerging themes as distinct but connected parts of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed. The use of the arrows not only alluded to the popular statement about the need for good communication with family and other professionals but also the need to bear in mind an integrated whole which is greater than the sum of constituent parts, as in definitions of holism. This diagram was considered a draft, a work in progress but a useful tool to stimulate discussion during interviews, after they had shared their own ideas about holistic working, see Appendices 15 and 16.

Depth study

Placement setting and main observation sites

The depth study was based in a Youth Offending Team office in a Midlands city with a population of around 300,000. This brief profile is designed to give an impression of the

team area without identifying it, allowing the team's confidentiality to be protected. Over three quarters of the city's population are White, but other ethnicities including Black and Black British, Asian and Asian British and Mixed Heritage are represented as across the region as a whole (Office for National Statistics, 2010c).

Similarly to other Midlands cities, socio-economic factors include a lower than the national average proportion of upper managerial and professional jobs and a higher than average proportion of more 'routine occupations'. Unemployment is also above the national average, while there is an above average number of students in the city's educational establishments. This student emphasis also affects the age profile, as with other Midlands cities. The city studied had average numbers of children in each age group, above average numbers of adults aged 18-34 and lower than average numbers of older adults. As with other Midlands cities, there is an above average proportion of lone parent families. Educational achievement is lower than the national average while the rate of unauthorised absence from education was higher than the national average, as with most Midlands cities (all from Office for National Statistics, 2010c). Violent crime is higher than the national average, in common with other Midlands cities, while other crime is also above the national average (Home Office, 2009a). The number of sexual offences has been considerably higher than the national average (Home Office, 2009a), also not uncommon in Midlands cities.

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) were set up in England and Wales in 2000 following direction from the Crime & Disorder Act (1998 s. 39). The establishing of the YOT was assigned to the local authority, with mandated co-operation from local police, probation committees and health authorities. Staffing at a YOT must include at least one probation officer, at least one local authority social worker, at least one police officer, and at least one appointed worker from each local health and education authority as well as additional staff agreed by the agencies. The task for the YOT is to co-ordinate youth justice provision for all in the area who need them and to plan, fund and carry out other provision in accordance with the Crime & Disorder Act (1998). YOTs vary in size and staffing across England and Wales dependent on the youth population and crime levels which affect service needs. The YOT studied was moderately large, based in the city

centre and included professionals from each of the services mentioned above as well as more generic youth offending team officers, Connexions and drugs service workers and a parenting team.

Within the Youth Offending Team, the most time was spent observing the team with particular responsibility for young people considered to need extra support due to higher risk to themselves and others. The majority of young people who have received community disposals for serious sexual offences are supervised by members of this team, while young people who have committed more minor sexual offences may be overseen by the Referral Order team. Young people who have received custodial sentences for sexual offences will come under the supervision of the Detention and Training Order team. Observation took place within the main team offices, at a wide range of meetings within the building, at external meetings at associated local authority offices and in one out of area residential placement (see Appendix 19). No direct client work was observed but access was available to paper and PC based client files, team and external policies on local intranet, team circulated emails and resources for assessment and intervention work.

Data sources gathered

A field journal was kept recording notes from meetings, observations and researcher reflections. Anonymised copies of meeting minutes and notes were also retained as available. Electronic copies of relevant team emails were saved, along with copies of useful policies and procedures. Data gathered from client files was generally recorded in anonymised form within the field journal. Additionally client contacts from three key cases were also anonymised and saved electronically. Copies were obtained of data spreadsheets containing all police referrals within the area over the previous three years, as well as summary files outlining offence types and disposals. These were also anonymised before storage. Twenty-four interviews were also undertaken with individuals, as detailed below. Interviews were digitally recorded and manually transcribed, creating a corpus of over 200,000 words.

Interviewees – participant demographics

Nineteen staff were interviewed, fourteen from the Youth Offending Team and five from associated agencies. Interviewees from the YOT included the manager and four staff from the high support team, two police officers, two case managers from other teams, a parenting worker, an NHS worker, two referral order workers and a victim worker. Staff were approached who had particular experience working with young people who had sexually harmed, and secondarily to represent the range of teams and backgrounds across the YOT. The five staff from external agencies included two social workers, a residential worker and two therapists, all with involvement with a case of a young person who had sexually harmed. Of all these staff, just over half were female and all were White except one Black British worker. All the workers were experienced and most had been in post for over four years; the exceptions being the police officers and one social worker who had more recently transferred from related posts. The majority of staff were aged between 35 and 50, with a few younger or older. Most had work backgrounds in social work, probation, nursing, residential work or policing, or a combination of these; while around a third had additional experience of working in very different fields such as hospitality, driving, acting and retail. A grid showing basic but non-identifying details of the interviewees is given in Appendix 18.

Additionally, two referral order panel members, one parent and two young people were interviewed. The panel members were male volunteers, one of whom was a retired magistrate while the other was a full-time carer but they had both had recent experience on panels with young people who had sexually harmed. The parent was the step-mother of a young person who had sexually harmed but spoke more about her experience as the mother of a female sibling victim of sexual harm. She had been identified by a victim worker as being keen to tell her story. The two young males interviewed were aged sixteen and eighteen and neither was involved with on-going intervention from the YOT, though both had previously received intervention from the high support team following serious charges for sexual harm. One other young person was identified as being in this appropriate category of having recently ended contact with the YOT but many attempts

to interview this young person were unsuccessful. These further five interviewees were all White.

The five staff from external agencies were all involved in the case of one of the young people interviewed, who was resident in an external therapeutic placement. The researcher attended this young person's Looked After Child Review and following this agreed interviews with the young person, one of his key workers, his two therapists and the two social workers representing him and his siblings. The interviews with this young person, the key worker and the therapists all subsequently took place within the therapeutic placement, while the social workers were interviewed in their offices more local to the YOT. The parent was interviewed within her own home respecting her preference. All other interviews took place within the YOT building.

Interviews followed a semi-structured format, using the agreed interview schedules (see Appendices 13-16). The two volunteer panel members were interviewed together using the internal professionals' schedule but with some additional explanations. All other interviews were conducted individually with the exception of the parent interview where other family members (two toddler grandchildren and a young adult daughter) were also present. All staff and panel member interviews included consideration of the themes diagram above, while the young people interviewed were assisted to create their own diagrams representing what it meant to see the whole picture regarding helping a young person who had sexually harmed.

Responses to key themes diagram

Responses from staff and panel members to the four themes diagram were notably positive with a few additions or adjustments being suggested. Often the conversations flowed very naturally between the different areas. One YOT staff member was very positive (67):

> "I can see why all of the things are there, they all seem to be extremely important… you could say the seeing the whole young person encompasses all those things, but it's helpful to break them down."

Similarly an external therapist commented (59):

> "well, [my] immediate response is that's a nice way of doing it; there are challenges within all four domains".

In a number of cases, practitioners identified the need for an area of work particularly connected to their role to be prioritised, as when a victim worker was particularly keen for victim work to be included. Victim work was also prioritised by a police officer, repeating the concern for the needs of victims which had previously been raised by the questionnaire responses. One staff member from a therapeutic placement prioritised therapeutic input and a family worker placed the emphasis on family work.

Other respondents suggested a wider context for working holistically, looking more at the young person's background and history or adding extra timescale dimensions in the corners of the diagram. One therapist suggested (62):

> "for me, it would be having something in each corner that would be the past, the present and the future and aspirations, because those are the things that impact or motivate this system".

Another YOT worker suggested placing the whole diagram in a political framework (51):

> "all of those [themes] are set within [a] political framework… because families don't and young people don't live in a vacuum; it's the structural framework that they're brought up in which has a massive influence on what they do … economics is vital to everything that we do."

The idea that a holistic approach incorporates a wider political and social context can be seen in models by Dominelli (2002: p.184) and Smith (2008: p.129) as well as in Durham's (2006) approach to work with young people who have sexually harmed. While the importance of the social context was a finding from the Master's research it was given comparatively less prominence in this study due to the limited mentions during the open responses to questions about what is holistic practice and the rare selection of this statement as one of the most important, see Figure 3 above. The generally positive response to the four theme areas identified supported their selection as the main themes for analysis and further discussion. While suggestions for development of the diagram were made, these were with a view to fine-tuning or clarifying rather than challenging

the inclusion of main themes or disagreeing that these were important. The following chapters will examine these main themes in more detail.

Example of analysis process

This following section will give an example of the analysis process and will show the further development of one of the main themes: working with wider family. This theme will be presented fully in chapter six along with working with peers, but the purpose of this section is to describe the processes of analysis and to give more of an audit trail for the methods used. The identification of the theme was drawn from the quantitative survey findings as outlined above, with confirmation from grounded theory analysis of the open question responses in the survey. The preliminary analysis followed many of the same steps as will be described below, but the start point for this description is the later analysis period relating to the theme of working with wider family. Similar steps were used to develop each of the four main themes; the family topic is chosen here due to the originality and applicability of the generated theory but similar evidence could be shown for each of the other sections of analysis undertaken.

The primary data corpus for analysis regarding the theme of working with families was drawn from the interviews conducted during the research placement. Sections of each interview which made reference to families, working with parents or carers and working with peers or peer influence were copied together into one document of around 40,000 words. This involved many answers to initial questions about what it means to work holistically as well as more direct answers to questions about work with family and peers and closing questions about priorities and other ideas (see Appendices 13-16). Line by line analysis was conducted on this collection of interviews, with particular attention paid to sections which included a number of ideas about work with families. One early section was taken from Interviewee 51:

Table 5. Extract from transcript with codes

	Extract from transcript – Interviewee (S1) and researcher (S)	Preliminary coding	Later theme code
351	S - yeah, what's important about [working with families] and what are the challenges?		
352	S1 - er well again, the behaviour doesn't come from nowhere, and so it is really	Roots of behaviour;	C
353	important to do an assessment of the family and to find out if you can, clues as to	Need for assessment; Clues	C
354	where the behaviour's come from, but also to make sure the young person is safe	Safety	A
355	within the family, that he or she feels safe, but also if there are other siblings in the	Need to feel safe; Safety of siblings	A
356	family, obviously that they're, the child protection issues have been looked at. Erm,	Child protection issues	A
357	and, there are erm, there are ways of working with families, erm, which can give them	Ways of working with	D
358	the tools to be able to erm, put safer boundaries in for the kids, to give the right	Give parents tools; Safer boundaries	D
359	messages to to the young people, erm, and I think it's really important, if a child	Parents give messages to young people	D
360	particularly, well not just if they're still living in the family but particularly if they're	May not be living with family	D
361	still living in the family, that you work with the whole family and not just concentrate	Work with the whole family; not just the young person	D
362	on the young person. I strongly believe that the child is a product of his family and	Child a product of his family	D
363	the society which he's brought up in, and I think again that has a lot of challenges	Product of society	C
364	S - yeah		
365	S1 - because as I say, the behaviour hasn't come from nowhere, and people are, can be,	Roots of behaviour	B
366	reluctant to, not always but can be reluctant to engage in, erm, with a worker, and	Reluctance to engage	B
367	doing work on how their family is, you know, it's a kind of personal, unique thing	Personal nature of work	B

Following the identification of 174 separate codes relating to family and peers, these were drawn together in a number of sub themes and threads. While the occurrence of individual codes was used to indicate the popularity of particular concepts, the sub-themes and threads list was extended to ensure inclusion of all the different concepts. Numerically the most popular codes were:

Figure 5. Key concepts regarding family and peers

Vital to chip in with family (7)	Problems working with peers (5)
Family culture (6)	Behaviour affected family (4)
Family background (6)	Engagement (4)
Massive peer influence (6)	Context = community (4)
Complex history (6)	Impact on the family (4)
Challenges of relating with families (6)	Wider family assistance e.g. forms (4)
Roots of behaviour (5)	Challenges of home visits (4)
Prevention (5)	Some family members abusive/negative (4)
With family boosts effectiveness (5)	Distance from family (4)
Include family (5)	Improve relationships in family (4)
Need for family's support (5)	

The full list of sub themes and threads relating to families is also included below, see Table 6.

The first seven of these sub-themes in Table 6 can be seen to link directly to the passage from the interview included above. There were also already some clear contrasts between the family needs and the support they can offer, see sub-themes 8) and 9), as well as the contrasts between families who resist support or are over-dependent, see sub-themes 17) and 18). The identification of contrasts and dichotomies was used in the next stage of more axial coding, see Table 7 below.

Table 6. Family Sub themes and threads

Family Sub Themes & Threads	See theme
1. Family background has had massive influence	C
2. Family culture has massive influence now	C
3. Understanding family can give insights into roots of behaviour	C
4. Often ongoing child protection concerns re: siblings	A
5. Young person needs safe home environment as well	A
6. Young person also a product of social environment/ society	c/f
7. Individual families are unique and different	c/f
8. Parents and siblings have issues and need support	B
9. Parents and siblings can support and boost effectiveness of work	D
10. Parents are experts – need to listen to their views	E
11. Young person's behaviour has impact on their family	C
12. Parents may experience blame, shame, embarrassment	C
13. Separating young person from family seriously affects both	A
14. Families often involve complex issues, tensions, loyalties	B
15. Some family members may be abusive/ neglectful/ negative	C
16. Some issues common to many families, Triple P may help	B
17. Some families distrust agencies, resistant to intervention	B
18. Some families over-dependent on agencies, avoid responsibility	B
19. Home visits increase understanding but resources pressured	c/f
20. Some families/ cultures deny/ avoid knowledge	A/B
21. Improving family relationships/ communication helps all	E
22. Issues of labelling/ stigma – "bad" or "failed" parents	E
23. Good work with families is preventative – with young person or siblings	D
24. Work with families is delicate/ difficult/ avoided?	B
25. Residential settings can miss out family role/ influence	c/f
26. Changes taking place to provision for family work	c/f
27. Some families involve generations of abuse/ danger	A
28. Young person may prefer not to involve their family	c/f
29. Partnership with families – powerful but possible?	E
Main themes **A-E** are included for reference later. **c/f** indicates that the sub-theme was not seen as included in the main themes and was Carried Forward for inclusion in later discussion.	

Table 7. Comparing family dichotomies within research findings

On one hand...	*	On the other hand...	*
Family background and culture a strength	E	Family background and culture brings negatives	B
Family can give insights into whole young person	C	Other family needs can distract from young person	B
Siblings may be protected if young person removed	A	Removal of young person from family brings new problems	A
Individual families are unique and different	c/f	Common parenting difficulties – group can help	C
Some family members can be abusive	A	Young person still wants his family, they are still important to him	c/f
Involving parents boosts effectiveness	D	Young person may resist allowing family involvement	c/f
Parents can be the experts – powerful means	E	Involving parents complicates and reduces professionals' control	E
Families may have negatively impacted young person's behaviour	C	Young person's behaviour negatively impacts family	C
Most parents want to do their best for their children	D	Some families can be dangerous, abuse entrenched	A
Strong family bonds can bring resilience	E	Strong family loyalties and secrets can harm	AB
Need to see wider causes and contributing factors	C	Parents may feel blame, shame embarrassment; labelled "bad parents"	C
Some families distrust agencies, are hard to engage	B	Some agencies give up or avoid these difficulties	B
Recognise family needs, bring in services	B	Some families are over-dependent or swamped	B
Improve communication within families	E	Some families avoid/ deny issues	AB
Work with families can be preventative	D	Preventative work vulnerable to funding cuts	c/f
Partnership with families, ownership and agency	DE	Some families are 'dangerous', too many risks	A
Need to see community, home visits, environment	C	Home visits need time, resources, car parking	c/f
Specialist residential placement can be 'like family'	c/f	Time limited, young person will return to own family eventually	A

* Again, the main theme codes A-E are included for reference later, and c/f indicates that the point was Carried Forward for later analysis outside the main themes.

Consideration of all these dichotomies within the area of working with family led to the process note below:

> "Am not finding it easy to pull all the different codes/ threads about families together. Lots of opinions and contradictions. Interesting to consider parents both part of the problem and part of the solution, and also to consider how much agency we want them to have as opposed to the young person. With younger children it's more obviously up to the parents but at what stage does the young person have the right to not involve his parents – or is that a cop-out sought by the worker?..." (S Hall, analysis note, 22/12/09)

The following day the Five Views of Family Influence diagram was devised, see Figure 9, p.161. This comprised five categories:

A. "Dangerous Families"
B. Families in Need
C. Recognise Influences
D. Parents can Support Work
E. Parents as Experts.

Many of the sub-themes and threads above fitted well within these five categories, as has been indicated by the use of the A-E coding in the tables above. Another process note addressed some of the issues about delineating these five categories:

> "Following on from my note from yesterday I have just developed the Models of family engagement/ agency/ involvement boxes and I am quite pleased with it as a useful diagram. However, right away I can see the risk of categorising families within one of the five boxes and I don't think this would be generally helpful or a true reflection of reality. Most families would probably include engagement across at least three of the boxes, and it could be argued that a non-abusive parent could be an expert/ project manager even where a whole family might be considered dangerous. I know Interviewee 74 certainly made a comment about dealing with risk first, then what the parents want.
>
> Perhaps it's more about how the professional sees the family, and the professional's expectations of involvement or recognition of needs. The way these needs are addressed is very much linked into the multi-agency issues, but I think it's differing perspectives of the families' contribution by professionals which may contribute to some of the contrasting views of family work.
>
> It is a challenge to bring positive support and engagement out of the more needy or risky families, but probably not impossible in most cases."
> (S Hall, analysis note, 23/12/09)

The family and peers transcript document was then reviewed marking sections relevant to these five categories A-E. Record was made of comments by each interviewee that could be seen to be related to each of these categories.

Table 8. Mentions of family themes by interviewees

Category theme	Mentioned by how many interviewees, and which?
A) "Dangerous families"	13 (all were social workers, residential / specialist staff)
B) Families in need	19 (others more concerned with young person's needs)
C) Recognise influences	23 (only one young person avoiding family issues)
D) Families can support work	16 (others more focused on family's needs/ problems)
E) Parents as experts	6 (parent worker, victim worker and few others)

A similar process was undertaken for each of the four main themes. Later the field work journal and other notes were re-read for information pertaining to these categories and other issues outside these categories. Further evidence was used as examples to illustrate the themes as will be seen in chapter six when the family and peers themes are fully explored. The examples contained in Table 9 give an indication of how the researchers' field notes echoed the themes raised although these necessarily simplify the complex family issues involved.

Table 9. Additions from field journal to family theme

Additions from field journal to families categories	
"Dangerous Families"	
Kids with no structure, no family support	Emotional abuse
Challenges round domestic violence	*Dangerous families* research (Dale et al, 1986)
Young person's abusive family system	More complex family dynamics
Lots of abuse in family tree	Mum inactive about abuse
Damage from father but went back	Cycles/ chains/ cogs of abuse
?Residential was worse	Another complex abusive family
Families in Need	
Chaotic household	Mum in court for fraud and drinking
See parents as an inconvenience	Mum struggling
Mum at end of tether – then what?	Sibling victim refused counselling
Need connected view – think family	Family still troubled, need support
Victims in family – needs addressed?	Mum unwilling to discuss allegation
Early intervention project – check siblings' needs	Sisters putting selves at risk of exploitation
Young person violent to parents	
Recognise Influences	
Hard to expect kids to be better educated that adults re: PC language etc.	Think Family – not tunnel vision Different classes of parents (generally far fewer examples)
Parents can support	
How specifically do family reduce risk of harm?	Mum honest & open, contributing (generally far fewer examples)
Parents doing all they can	
Parents as experts	
Full of fight, against the injustice	(only example identified)
Additional issues relating to family outside these categories	
Intensive support project – some young people with no family support at all.	Wondering if anyone apart from worker gave young person an 18th birthday little gift
Mum not keen for contact, self centred	
Young person wanting picture of his mum – only one available not really appropriate	Justice for sibling victims, support Young person unwilling to involve family

Several different types of data were used to triangulate and confirm the findings and these will be shown by the use of quotations from the interviews and examples from observed practice. Additional issues were also identified from each source and will be used to inform the discussion throughout the family and peers chapter. Examination of the Five Views of Family Influence diagram (Figure 9, p.161) and related discussion will

show how the early codes from the section of transcript above and emerging themes were combined in the model. Basic quantitative (content) analysis was also used to summarise the frequency of code occurrence and the number of interviewees who referred to each of the five categories (see Neuendorf, 2002). Statistical analysis was not appropriate due to the small numbers of participants involved.

As described in chapter three, the majority of criteria for quality inferences for mixed methods have been demonstrated by the design quality and appropriate analytic methods. The exception to this is the limited amount of quantitative data collected and the associated reliability of the survey data. The choice to prioritise the main fieldwork placement rather than repeated efforts to recruit more survey participants was made pragmatically based on time constraints and the need to maximise useful data collection from the opportunities available. The consistency of the findings and conclusions will be discussed later in chapter ten. The following chapters will set out the findings of the study in relation to the robustly selected four main themes.

Chapter 5 - Findings : Seeing the whole young person

Introduction

The primary theme of seeing the whole young person will be explored further in this chapter. Early stage quotations from interviews and the breadth survey (before any themes had been suggested by the researcher) will introduce the theme and then the findings from further analysis of transcripts and other data will be shared. The question of what makes up the whole person will be addressed, with the comparison of a large number of models and consideration of the usefulness of a new model. Links to the literature presented in chapter two will be made, and a number of reasons will be suggested to form a rationale for seeing the whole young person.

The benefits, challenges and implications of seeing the whole young person will be explored through consideration of the shared opinions of participants and the realities of working life observed in the placement. Finally the question of how well the researcher saw the whole young person will be discussed, with reference to the research limitations and ethical considerations.

The emerging theme

Responses to questions about what it means to work holistically most frequently prompted replies referring to the need to see the whole young person. One experienced YOT worker explained how working holistically means (71):

> "treating the individual, basically I hate this label of 'young offender'. I think we work with young people who commit offences, and I think we have to remember that they have a whole range of needs... it's about looking at the individual as a whole person, not just attaching that label 'offender', but thinking about how they are as pupil, friend, sister, teenager, member of society."

This quotation raises a number of key issues which will be addressed in this chapter. The issue of labelling will be considered as one of the obstacles to seeing the whole

young person. The range of needs presented by the young person and ways of assessing these will be covered as different models are compared. Seeing the different roles a young person plays (see Goffman, 1959; Robson & Lambie, 2006), and particularly the positive strengths they have to draw on and contribute will also form a clear part of the rationale for seeing the whole young person.

One forensic psychologist more explicitly mentioned the consideration of needs and strengths within the breadth survey (26):

> "I would say that holistically means wanting to address all of a [young person's] needs & promote all their particular strengths not just focusing on specific offences. This includes developmental, educational, cultural, attachment, family relationships etc."

Another YOT worker stressed how we recognise the different needs by the way we see - our perspective (68):

> "I would suggest to work holistically was to look at it from all different angles... to try to put yourself in the place of that young person and their family... The young people we work with generally have such complex needs ... and we continually have to adjust our practice to work with young people."

These early mentions of the importance of family relationships and family culture demonstrate that the boundary between considering the whole young person and working with their family and peers is not clear cut. While work with family and peers will be addressed specifically in the following chapter, the effects of the family and peers on a young person's identity and wellbeing mean that there will naturally be some overlap when the whole young person is considered. This leads on to some discussion about what makes up the whole young person.

What makes up the whole young person

Two important provisos need to be made before the consideration of the large number of models proposing what makes up the whole young person. The first is the importance of seeing each young person as an individual, as was stressed by a number of interviewees.

Any scheme which suggests the consideration of a number of areas of a young person's life may be helpful in highlighting specific strengths and needs, but it may also omit areas which are vitally important for that individual. No assessment method is a substitute for building a relationship and properly getting to know a young person as an individual. Secondly, separating out areas for assessment or consideration may detract from seeing the young person *as a whole*, since the interconnection of these factors and areas is vital. Separating out a young person's health needs for example, may be part of completing assessments and considering referrals to other agencies, but the actual health needs may be inextricably linked to housing problems, self-esteem issues and the need for greater family support.

In analysis of the interview transcript portions relating to seeing the whole young person, the following key concepts emerged, in order of popularity: (numbers indicate concept occurrence).

Figure 6. Key concepts regarding seeing the whole person

Family (18)	Need to build trust (7)
Concerning behaviour (11)	Issue of high risk (7)
Background/history (11)	Assessment (7)
School (11)	How much they reveal (7)
Roots of behaviour (10)	Takes time to see whole person (7)
System/legislation (10)	**Peers** (7)
Not just offending (10)	Public protection (6)
Client centred/led (9)	Seeing everything (6)
Relationships (9)	Naïve to always believe young person (6)
Health (9)	Labelling/ categorising young person (6)
Multiple problems/complex needs (8)	Understanding young person (6)
Difficulty of talking (8)	Interdependent aspects (6)
Young person also victim of abuse (8)	See their needs (6)
Support young person through programme (7)	Help young person understand (6)

Many of these themes will be addressed throughout the rest of this chapter, but those in bold type can be considered part of what makes up the whole young person as opposed to issues and challenges affecting seeing the whole young person. Other aspects mentioned fewer times included mental health, childhood issues, housing, culture,

identity, emotional health, sexual health, poverty, social problems and family belief systems.

A selection of wellness models have been mentioned in the literature review, chapter two, in addition to assessment models familiar to youth justice professionals including Asset, the AIM framework and the Children's Workforce Development Council Common Assessment Framework, CAF (CWDC, 2010a; DH, 2000). Rather than 'reinventing the wellness wheel', these models were compared in terms of evidence base and overlaps. Both Asset and the AIM framework were devised combining aspects with evidence to indicate the likelihood of reoffending or intervention needs rather than prioritising a full view of the young person. The AIM framework does draw on domains from the earlier *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (DH, 2000) which stresses an 'ecological approach'. The UK's most widely used, evidenced model of a young person's developmental needs is this side of the CAF triangle, which was developed from research by Ward (2001).

Table 10 below compares a number of other wellness and assessment models to the 7 key CAF development areas. The AIM model is not included as it states explicit links to this framework. Each of the models can be seen to fit within the CAF Development areas, with exceptions which are either included in the Parenting capacity or Environment sides of the triangle, or otherwise clearly external to the young person, such as the impact of the media or Government. The CAF area of Behavioural Development which supersedes the earlier area of Social Presentation used in the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* is particularly useful for including areas connecting to offending or concerning behaviour, while social presentation can be considered within emotional and social development.

Table 10. Comparing Wellness Models to CAF Areas

CAF Area ▸ / Model ▾	Health	Learning	Emotional & Social Development	Identity	Family & Social Relationships	Behavioural Development	Self Care Skills	NOT INCLUDED
Good Lives Model Ward & Stewart (2003)	Life Healthy functioning	Knowledge Excellence in work & play Creativity	Friendship Happiness	Spirituality	Community (Friendship)	Excellence in Agency	Inner peace	
Human Givens Griffin & Tyrrell (1997)		Sense of competence & achievement	Emotional intimacy Privacy, chance to reflect	Sense of meaning & purpose Sense of status	Attention to give & receive Feeling part of community	Sense of autonomy and control		Security – External in parenting
Lakota/ Cirde of Courage Warne (2005)/ Brendtro et al(1990)	Physical – actions/ courage	Mental – decisions/ wisdom	Emotional – reactions/ generosity	Spiritual – values/ fortitude (Belonging)	Belonging – honour attachment	Respect humility	Independence autonomy	
6 dimensions of Wellness Hettler (undated)	Physical	Intellectual	Emotional	Spiritual	Social		Occupational	
Indivisible Self Sweeney & Myers (2003)	Physical exercise nutrition	Creative thinking, work	Creative emotions, control, positive humour	Essential spirituality, gender cultural identity Coping- self worth	Social friendship, love		Coping- stress management Essential self care	
Asset Youth Justice Board (2006)	Physical health Substance use Emotional & mental health	Education Training and employment	Emotional & mental health Perception of self & others Indicators of vulnerability	Perception of self & others	Family & personal relationships	Lifestyle, Substance use Thinking & behaviour Attitudes to offending Motivation to change	Lifestyle Indicators of vulnerability	Neighbourhood – External in Environment
Wheel of Wellness Witmer et al. (1998)	Exercise Nutrition	Problem solving & creativity Education, business, work	Sense of humour, Emotional awareness, coping	Spirituality, Gender & Cultural Identity, Sense of worth, Religion, self direction	Friendship Community Family Love	Sense of control	Self care Stress management	Media Government – both External

Rather than devising a new model for seeing the whole young person, this research has consequently chosen to adapt a familiar model: that of the CAF Development needs. Repeating the earlier provisos that each young person must be seen as an individual, and the importance of seeing the interconnection of factors, a visual representation based on the CAF Development Areas, incorporating other wellness models and key concepts from research analysis is presented below.

Figure 7. Connected Segments to See the Whole Young Person who has Sexually Harmed

All the lines are deliberately dotted to indicate the permeable nature of the boundaries and the interconnection of areas. The segments are deliberately placed adjacent to related fields. While the whole young person can be seen within the circle, the choice to indicate associated external factors was inspired by one YOT worker, who commented (54):

> "By holistic you mean outside and in… external factors and internal factors… because we're paid to deal with thoughts and feelings, and I think we're also paid to look at environmental factors…"

This also allowed the inclusion of factors from the other CAF triangle sides, and more themes raised within the research. This model does not focus on offending behaviour to the same extent as the AIM model or Asset and will be less useful than these in evaluating future risk of offending. However, it provides a simple overview of the whole young person who has sexually harmed, their needs and the surrounding context.

Rationale for seeing the whole young person – benefits

Analysis of the benefits of seeing the whole young person moved from a number of key concepts via axial coding and memo writing to the identification of four main reasons. These are:

- See the young person as "an OK human being", respecting autonomy and individuality;
- Understand the range of needs, vulnerabilities, problems, influences to be addressed;
- See roots of harmful behaviour, understand how to address future risks;
- See strengths and positives, things to build on and use for the future.

Combined in these reasons are benefits to do with making the work as effective as possible in helping the young person, protecting potential future victims and improving outcomes while acting within a framework that supports respectful, anti-oppressive practice and includes a focus on strengths and protective factors.

Seeing an "ok human being" – respecting autonomy and individuality

As will be shown later under challenges, a key element to holistic working and seeing the whole young person depends on the attitude of the worker. One social worker asserted (53):

> "working holistically is … about your attitudes and your beliefs: … how you see people, human beings, and what sort of regard you have for human beings… Whether you see them as 'ok human beings' who have done things that you don't agree with, or whether you see them as 'not ok human beings' in the first place because of what they've done".

The focus on these young people as more than simply young offenders has been a very important part of exploring working holistically (DH/ Home Office, 2006; Hackett et al., 2003). This respect for the young people affects how workers see the individuals as well as their way of working. A YOT worker expressed the opinion that (67):

> "Certain things [because of court orders]…, are kind of non-negotiable… however I still feel there are different ways about having those kind of discussions that still respect the person's autonomy and empowers them to feel that they are making choices, even though some of those choices are limited by the circumstances."

Acting to respect the young person and seeking to build a good working relationship has further benefits in terms of increasing attendance and engagement with the work. As well as avoiding the labelling and language issues which have been explored earlier, understanding more about each young person's identity is seen as vital in effective work to effectively address the concerning behaviour as well as other needs the young person brings. Consideration of the young person's identity necessarily involves links with their family and peer cultures, which will be explored further in the next chapter.

Understanding the range of needs, vulnerabilities, problems and influences to be addressed

The second part of a rationale for seeing the whole young person relates to the idea that each young person is potentially experiencing a wide range of needs, only some of which may be related to concerning sexual behaviour. A holistic viewpoint is needed to

understand the range of needs of each young person within their family context, as described by one YOT staff member (74):

> "holistically might describe *Every Child Matters* outcomes, … health … education and … all the other needs that they've got, and obviously, within that would be a need for them not to offend, and then you've got the circle round the outside, the family's medical and financial needs etcetera, and all of those needs are being met, so that eventually, that whole family, it's 360 degrees around them as well."

This presentation of a wide range of needs relates to the whole person diagram above, but also to more systemic presentations of the young person embedded in other systems from family to community as used by Multi-Systemic Therapy, (see for example, Letourneau & Swenson, 2005). Here again the connections to family work and overlaps with this other main theme of the research can be seen. However, not all young people present within a family system, as in this example given by one social worker (58):

> "I work with a young person at the moment who's been quite horrifically sex trafficked to the UK… statistics suggest that she needs to be in education … straight away, … and I understand she needs to improve her outcomes, but her priority needs at the moment are to stay safe. She's quite traumatised…there are primarily males in the class, so that's going to be disruptive for her, so I think Government targets don't always match the needs of the children."

The ability and permission to prioritise needs in this way have implications regarding multi-agency working, as will be seen later. The needs for a young person to feel physically and psychologically safe are mentioned by Ryan & Blum (1994) as vital parts of a therapeutic relationship. One of the young people who had been known to the high need team for many years had a very chaotic lifestyle and serious range of complex needs. His unwillingness to engage with services and frequent changes of temporary address significantly impacted the team's attempts to help him.

See roots of harmful behaviour, understand how to address future risks

Another key part of the rationale for seeing the whole young person is how this can reveal the roots of the harmful behaviour and offer insight into how to help the young person avoid future offending and sexual harm. One YOT worker asked (63):

> "What is the reason for this person doing what they're doing?... There's a reason behind everything. Let's look at this person's ... whole lifestyle: ... family background, parents, extended family members, education. Let's look at everything, let's bring it all together and find out where any weak links are that could possibly be the reason for their behaviour".

The importance of understanding *why* a young person has sexually harmed is of key importance to some professionals but less mentioned by others. The need for someone or something to blame is perhaps common in wider society, but it is also vital to stress that seeking to understand reasons for behaviour is not the same as justifying or excusing the behaviour in any way. Many young people who sexually harm have themselves been victims of abuse whether sexual, physical or emotional abuse or neglect (Erooga & Masson, 2006). Another frequent factor in the background of young people who sexually harm is witnessing domestic violence, and it has been argued that this 'dysfunctional model of behaviour based on an abuse of power' (Scott & Telford, 2006, 182) affects what young people consider acceptable behaviour. Bentovim (1998) also reported that maternal history of sexual abuse was an important risk factor, particularly with young people who had not themselves been victimised. He proposed that a general environment of violence in the family has a significant influence along with other trauma during development. Within the YOT team, several key staff members also raised the issue of sexual exploitation as a serious influence in the background of a number of young people known to the team for sexual offending. While less evidence is available on this topic, an association seems understandable in cases where young people are exploited and encouraged to harm and/or recruit others.

A key principle of the Good Lives Model (see Collie et al., 2007) is to identify what needs are being met through the harmful sexual behaviour, and to encourage the young person to find healthy ways of meeting these needs. This was referred to by a number of professionals who work using this model. One social worker described a similar philosophy in this way (58):

> "I see my role is to get them to think things through, as in why they do what they do, and where that's stemmed from and, try to incorporate different ways for them to do things in different ways, ... trying to find out the root causes of why they do certain things and kind of try and rewire it a bit."

The idea of helping the young person to understand was a further emphasis for some professionals, and recognising links to past experiences can be helpful for young people to gain perspective on what they have done and how they can avoid similar behaviour. One young person shared the importance of looking at (72):

> "your past and what's happened in your past and stuff like that, because that may cause the reason why you've acted the way you've acted".

Again, a balance is needed between focusing on the harmful sexual behaviour and the wider picture of seeing the whole young person. While those interviewed were adamant that more than just the harmful behaviour needed to be seen and addressed, this is clearly a significant part of the work and one which is facilitated by this broader perspective, suggesting that holistic work is an inherent part of good practice.

See strengths and positives; things to build on and use for the future

The final part of the rationale for seeing the whole young person relates to the identification of the young person's strengths and other positive attributes, which act as protective factors as well as increasing engagement and allowing more respect for the young person. While the inclusion of positive factors is explicitly mentioned within the YOT Asset tool, one YOT worker described how this can be overlooked (66):

> "I think it's also about seeing the positives in young people, and … although we have that little section on Asset that says 'positive factors', we do totally forget about the positives on young people".

As has been mentioned within the literature review, theoretical influences from the AIM model, the Good Lives Model and others emphasise strengths within a context which takes a holistic view. Within the multi-disciplinary team there may be a drive towards education and training with the purpose of helping the young person to build a positive future. One police officer commented how (55):

> "It's not easy sometimes,… particularly if they don't want to engage in employment or training, because that's a big emphasis … to get them into that sort of area where hopefully they will get positive, get new skills, get new knowledge, and be able to actually take that out [into the world], and [make] a positive contribution, for the rest of their life and for society as well".

As in the quotation above with the young woman who had been trafficked, there is sometimes a tension between different agency priorities, as will be further explored under the multi-agency theme. The overall aim to recognise a young person's strengths and build on these completes the rationale for seeing the whole young person, and combined with the other elements should increase the effectiveness of the work in terms of helping the young person and protecting potential victims by reducing reoffending.

Barriers and challenges to seeing the whole young person

The quotations above have already begun to introduce some of the challenges to seeing the whole young person, and the literature review had previously suggested challenges which were echoed by findings from the interviews. Analysis led to the identification of challenges in four main areas, each located within a different part of the treatment 'system'. These are:

- The young person may be reluctant to share, disclose or reveal their whole person;
- The workers may have attitudes and prejudices including labelling the young person;
- System priorities of offence reduction, public protection and compliance;
- Restrictions of time, resources, funding, access to specialists.

There is clearly some overlap with the multi-agency theme which will be addressed later, but the inter-relatedness of these four main themes is to be expected within a holistic whole picture. This section will explore further these areas of challenge to seeing the whole young person, and the related impact on working holistically with these young people.

The young person may be reluctant to share, disclose or reveal their whole person

The challenges of encouraging a young person who has sexually harmed to talk are addressed by Lambie (2005), and he suggests a range of strategies but prioritises the

understanding of client factors (the whole young person and their needs), the therapeutic relationship and hope for change. The important influence of previous trauma, victimisation or exploitation can only be addressed as a young person is enabled to discuss these issues, and this depends on a great deal of trust and sufficient time to build an open relationship with a worker. When asked what a worker would do to see the whole picture, one young person responded (61):

> "first thing they'd do is ask a couple of questions … they won't ask loads cause, they'll know that you'll get a bit frustrated if you're asked loads of questions… they'd get your trust the first thing".

An experienced YOT worker explained about the trust and time involved to allow young people to disclose their own experiences of abuse (71):

> "Seeing the whole young person - sometimes it's about whether they want you to see. It can take years sometimes to see the whole young person, build up that relationship and trust… [we need to] listen to the research about relationships with their worker… I've got young people who've just disclosed to me about horrific abuse, and I've worked with one for two years and with one for three years, and it's taken that long for them to actually get to that stage of disclosure… which is why I say to the young people, I'm not going anywhere."

The challenges of having time and consistent workers will be addressed later in this section, but these clearly combine with the challenge of enabling young people to reveal more about themselves. The research mentioned by this worker about the importance of relationship is similar to that cited by Lambie (2005) from Lambert & Bergin (1994) who proposed that

> 'warmth, caring, empathy, acceptance, mutual affirmation and encouragement… probably account for the most gain in psychotherapy.' (Lambert & Bergin, 1994, cited in Lambie, 2005: p.129)

However, this same worker later gave a powerful example of when building this kind of relationship was not possible (71):

> "I learnt a … valuable lesson from a very … damaged young woman. She was extremely dangerous and violent … Me and my colleague weren't prepared to give up on her, [but] we weren't hearing what she actually wanted. She didn't want a relationship with a worker; she just wanted to get through her order. She wasn't ready to deal with her abuse, … in the end she assaulted my colleague as a way of getting out of this relationship, and it taught me a … valuable lesson about hearing what the young person is actually trying to say. Stop thinking 'I'm the

> saviour of the children of [City] and that I can form relationships with anybody'... There is a value in recognising that some children and young people are just too damaged, and what they need is that targeted [response], working on offending behaviour".

In this case, the challenge of seeing the *whole* young person was found to be in conflict with the first two parts of the rationale, respecting the young person and understanding their needs. The worker's conclusion, that in some cases a more targeted approach is needed, will be explored in greater detail later in chapter nine, when the question of whether a holistic approach is always best is discussed.

Another response to understanding that the young person may only reveal a portion of themselves was raised by workers who used this to explain the need to involve other people in assessment and intervention work, recognising that families and residential workers will see another side of the young person. One YOT worker suggested (52):

> "You'll only ever see how much they really want you to see as well, and that's why I think, working with the family is so crucial, because [the way young people present themselves] when they're on their own, can be a million miles away from when they're with their parents and family, so those two have to go hand in hand."

Again the link to work with families will be addressed in the following chapter, but they clearly offer another perspective, as do residential staff. One former residential worker expressed some frustration with the way young people appeared to be able to deceive YOT staff (58):

> "When I used to work in [residential care], kids who were offending, they used to ... go to YOTs, smile a bit and be quite nice, and then come back to the unit ... and probably like, smashed a wardrobe or something. ... It's quite easy for kids to ... be nice once a week ... say the right things, and... nothing really changed... They ... laugh about it, [saying] 'YOT workers... oh they're mugs' ".

Despite stating the importance of respecting and listening to young people, getting a full view of the whole young person requires the additional involvement of other family members and professionals. However, the views of others will be affected by their own attitudes and prejudices, as will be seen in the following section.

The workers may have attitudes and prejudices including labelling the young person

It has already been noted that some workers may be unwilling to see certain aspects of young people, such as sexual behaviour from young people who have learning difficulties (Fyson, 2007), but a wider range of detrimental attitudes and prejudices were acknowledged by staff interviewed, either in their own practice or in that of others. One social worker explained (53):

> "I think the first [challenge] is your perceptions of that young person, because as soon as you give somebody a label… people see the label … You can have like an all or nothing approach … the nothing is, well I'm going to completely ignore what they've done … and [focus on] where are [they] going to move to in the future; or you have the view in your head; this is the abuser, and that's what stays there … You've got to address your own prejudices, and how you deal with that, because it if it's tapping into issues that have resonance with you, that's going to stop you working".

This worker describes two extreme responses, of ignoring what the young person has done or focusing entirely on this young person as an abuser, both of which have clear disadvantages. The false dichotomy between the victim and the offender has been explored in criminological literature (see for example, Fattah, 1993). The labelling of young people as abusers has been discussed already in choices of terminology, but historically a number of influential projects have used terms such as 'abuser' in their names, including the NSPCC Young Abusers Project in London, only renamed in 2007 'National Child Assessment and Treatment Service - Sexually Harmful Behaviour'.

Another experienced YOT worker discussed the significance of sexual exploitation for a number of young people who have sexually harmed, but had great frustration with attitudes of politicians and management who refuse to acknowledge this issue, particularly as it affects young men (51):

> "I don't think people as a whole, politicians, can accept that [sexual exploitation] happens. I think it's so awful that there is a big block in people's minds and they don't believe that it happens, and I think that's a massive hurdle to get over … Councillors don't want to know. Senior officers don't want to know … for boys, nobody wants to know; it's so dirty and horrible and nasty and it happens in toilets and things. Nobody wants to know, so it is… a big challenge".

Here the wider political context and attitudes are seen as barriers to seeing the whole young person, and specifically dealing with this issue of sexual exploitation. Other barriers from the wider context and system will be presented in the following section.

System priorities of offence reduction, public protection and compliance

One interesting exchange with a senior staff member at the YOT began by discussing a priority of relationship with the young people, but then acknowledged over-riding systems concerns of risk, public protection, safeguarding and policy (57):

> Interviewee – "Evidence still suggests that the relationship is absolutely key, and so for me, that's where the priority is, and that's what our team's about really, building relationships with young people…"
> Sharon – "Great. How do you decide which; or how would you want the workers to decide which areas to prioritise if there's not time, resources, to address everything they want?"
> Interviewee – "It has to be risk led, for me. It has to be public protection led, because that's what our game is really; any safeguarding issues have to come top, so I suppose you'd have your *Every Child Matters* outcomes…"

While seeking to promote a holistic, young person focused approach, external priorities are always present in this, at times, high risk field. Even when serious needs have been identified for the young person, reduction of offending and protection of the public are the main YOT aims. There are multiple forms to keep up to date in terms of assessment and risk of serious harm, and the National Standards (YJB, 2010c) and Key Performance Indicators were mentioned by staff and management. As with other social work professions, a culture of managerialism, case management and administrative demands all threaten to reduce the amount of time professionals spend face-to-face with clients, seeing the whole person. One YOT staff member admitted (71):

> "basically what I do is I don't do my paperwork. That's how I prioritise. I would much rather be spending the time with the young person and so last night until 10 o'clock I was doing my Assets and my ROSHs and my RMPs on my bank holiday because I am behind."

One YOT worker considered the balance required between public protection and supporting the young person, and how there is a risk of practice becoming less holistic (70):

> "it's about public protection and all that. But you know, in the protecting, if we're not giving the support, if you take away the support and it becomes very much about monitoring and enforcement it becomes un-holistic".

Another police officer stressed the priority for support to enable the young person to comply with orders which are demanding in terms of time and participation (55):

> "the team itself: where possible the emphasis [is] on trying to support young people through the programme, and that's in terms of equipping them with the skills and the ability to actually comply with it".

This focus is rather different, seeking to avoid breach for the young person by helping them comply with the demands of the programme rather than seeing any programme of work as holistically helping a young person to change or learn. Here the management and targets focus could be said to prevent seeing the whole young person, unless the argument above that holistic work increases effective practice is heeded. Other system restrictions include the availability of time, resources, funding and access to specialists, as will now be discussed.

Restrictions of time, resources, funding, access to specialists

The amount of time given for therapeutic work with young people who have sexually harmed may be dependent on the length of Court Order they have received or may be more affected by the availability of specialist workers or placements (Hackett et al., 2003). One social worker argued against excessively long interventions but acknowledged the need for sufficient time and stability which sometimes necessitated an external placement (53):

> "Holistic working, I think, it's not a never ending, going into the nether regions of years and years and years, and I've seen counselling where it's done that and I think that's exploitative and abusive. I think you have to constantly process and find out whether it's appropriate… Sometimes you're not given time to do [work that is needed], that's why it works best when you can have it in…an environment that you control. That's why we use places like external placements… somebody's said [this young person] can have this placement for the next two years. So you can engage them, because you've got the time to do it."

Seeing the whole young person was considered to take quite a long time, particularly when complex family relationships were involved. One YOT worker explained (66):

> "Looking at everything that's going on for that young person, their relationships at home with their families can take an awful lot of time to try and untangle … This building isn't very appropriate to do [those] kind of things sometimes, so you've got to take them out … Meeting them at their own level can be quite hard … given the constraints of statutory work."

An additional time factor here is created by the need to use external buildings since the YOT building was considered unsuitable for personal work by several interviewees. One senior staff member complained (57):

> "We certainly haven't got enough resources for appropriate venues to see young people. We've been promised that for some time. There was talk in the city centre of having rooms with sofas, … you can't unpick people who've got these sorts of issues and then not put them back together again, so we need time, space…"

This lack of physical resources is a barrier to seeing the whole young person. Other resource issues raised included the lack of finance or local availability for some activities requested by young people. A YOT worker explained (70):

> "Resources can be a barrier, because obviously if you don't have the resources, … some of the things that young people want to do… we don't have the finances to do it, or there isn't the resources in terms of it's not available in the community."

While this may seem more frivolous, he went on to talk about the positive work and conversations that take place in a car or round a table tennis table, as will be explored later in the theme about using creative methods. The connection will be presented that access to suitable creative methods increases the worker's ability to see the whole young person. Additionally access to other specialist workers and placements can be seen as a resource issue which will be addressed in more detail under the theme of multi-agency working.

Implications from seeing the whole young person

Another main aim of this research has been to consider the implications of holistic working, and this section will identify some outcomes from seeing the whole young person, which will contribute to recommendations in a later chapter. The implications which will be discussed are:

- Needs will be identified that require input/ resources from other agencies;
- Openness increases the young person's vulnerability and need for good closure;
- A better understanding of contributing factors shows how more prevention work is needed;
- Better understanding should challenge worker attitudes and system requirements.

Again the interconnection of themes is unsurprising, and links will be made to other chapters and themes, most clearly under the first point to be addressed.

Needs will be identified that require input/ resources from other agencies

The whole person segments diagram above, Figure 7, p.140, can be seen as representing a range of areas most typically linked with different professionals addressing health, learning, family and social needs, behaviour/offending, spiritual care and self-care/ independence needs. As a holistic assessment considers needs across all of these areas there is likelihood that some identified needs will require input or consultation from professionals from other agencies, who may or may not be located within the local multi-agency team.

The challenges and implications of multi-agency working will be addressed in a subsequent chapter. There are vital links between seeing the whole young person and working in a multi-agency way. The useful additional perspectives from other professionals have already been mentioned above as a way of helping someone see the whole young person, but these same contacts who help see the young person and their needs will frequently have a role to play in addressing these needs.

Openness increases the young person's vulnerability and need for good closure

Respect is shown by seeking to see the whole young person, as has been described above. Respect is also required in response to the information shared by the young person and other family members. Following through with the needs identified and involving other agencies is part of this respect, but consideration is also required for the vulnerability of the young person in opening up in this way. The quotation above talked of the need to be prepared to help put someone back together once you have 'unpicked' the person or perhaps their situation. This need for good closure is part of each therapeutic encounter but also applies towards the end of a piece of work or therapeutic relationship. The emotional demands of this work are considerable on both the young people and the staff (Hackett, 2006).

Transition issues at the end of a residential placement or as a person leaves care are well documented, and often these can be difficult times as young people leave the supportive environment and move towards independent living. In the case of young person DM, discussed in relation to the *Childhood Lost* report (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001) above, the lack of follow up and support as he moved into the local community had tragic consequences. One example of a good transition within the research observation took place as the longstanding case of a young man who was turning eighteen was transferred to Probation services for on-going support. Good information sharing, identification of risks and needs and the passing on of useful contacts all sought to ensure the best follow through for the young person, although it was recognised that he would miss the support from individuals within the YOT. Effective closure and handover does require appropriate release of resources.

A better understanding of contributing factors shows how more prevention work is needed

Following on from the argument above for recognising more roots and contributing factors regarding sexual harm, there are implications regarding the need for more

preventative work (Finkelhor, 2009). The team studied previously had a prevention team although this had greatly decreased in staffing as other changes took place within the wider team. One YOT worker explained (68):

> "when I first came to the Youth Offending Team we had about 10 people working in the preventative team, now there's 2 people. … I always think about … prevention. I want to put stuff in place; I don't want to react once it's done, let's prevent."

In identified deprived areas, Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) and Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs) have taken on a more preventative role (YJB, 2010b) although their focus is more on anti-social behaviour and general offending.

The emphasis in this study has been how to work holistically with young people who have already sexually harmed, but any more holistic view of sexual harm in general would necessarily include significant consideration of how to prevent sexual harm in the first place. The barriers of systems requirements and limited time and resources greatly impact the preventative work that can be done by individual practitioners. However, there can be little doubt that experienced staff in this area could contribute significantly to preventative work, as well as the benefits of more working together with other local agencies to ensure suitable preventative work takes place. Some teams are more familiar with the dual role of prevention and intervention, and working with siblings and victims may have a preventative focus.

Better understanding should challenge worker attitudes and system requirements

The discussion of how worker attitudes can prevent staff from seeing the whole young person also has a reverse argument: that when staff *do* see the whole young person it will increase their respect for and understanding of the young people and lead to attitude change. This can be supported by better training for staff in both frontline and associated roles, as will be covered in more detail under the multi-agency theme.

If policy makers and senior management could be encouraged to see the whole young person in terms of working with young people who have sexually harmed, this could

have an influence in altering the excessive form-filling and offence-focused targets which impede holistic work. Since young people who have sexually harmed reoffend relatively infrequently, other measures are needed to recognise successful interventions (as in Borduin et al., 2009). Valuing change in a young person's home relationships, success in positive activities and emotional and social development might all be better indicators that the whole young person is making positive progress than simply the absence of offending and compliance with a Court order. Since Home Office and Department of Health reports recommend holistic working, this needs to be encouraged through policy change.

Reflection and Summary

Seeing the whole young person – reflecting on the research process

Towards the end of the methodologies chapter, the question of how well I saw the young people, (or the whole young people) was raised, and I shared my awareness that I did not see them as clearly as I would have liked. My reading of case files and attendance at meetings did give some insight into the complexities of some of the young people's lives, but my lack of direct contact with young people meant I was not in a position to build an understanding relationship of the type I have advocated above for professionals. Other research would be needed to effectively understand the young people's views of what it means to work holistically, but the limited findings which will be shared later in chapter nine could be expanded by building on this research to explore their views of how well people see the whole them, views about working with their family and peers, experiencing multi-agency work and participating in different creative activities.

Another key process question is how well I have presented the whole young people or perhaps my reasons for not presenting the whole young people. While this research has drawn on examples of real individuals, detailed case studies have not been presented for ethical reasons. No amount of information I could share in a thesis of this length would present the whole young people, but potted case histories which could be extracted and discussed were considered intrusive and beyond the agreed use of the young people's

personal information, even in a fully anonymised form. This does prevent the reader from seeing close to the whole young people, but was considered a necessary compromise.

Compromise is also necessary in reports by practitioners where length and time constraints prevent the presentation of the whole young person. While a complete view is perhaps unachievable, reflecting a range of aspects of the young person as encouraged by the segments model above should get closer to a balanced view of the whole young person.

Summary

This chapter has examined the first of the four main research themes: seeing the whole young person, and has drawn on data from the interviews, breadth survey and observation to demonstrate the prominence of this theme. A visual representation of the whole young person has been offered, while recognising that a holistic view is more than the sum of parts in any diagram. Benefits of seeing the whole young person were outlined in the form of a four part rationale, and associated challenges and implications were also presented. Many references have been made to other themes, particularly those of working with wider family and multi-agency working, and the inter-relatedness of the themes has been addressed in part, with more to follow.

Seeing the whole young person is a challenge in itself, and requires commitment, insight and understanding from staff. The benefits of an approach which sees the whole young person may not be easily measurable, but the ethical and humanistic imperative will be familiar to all who espouse social work or therapeutic values and can arguably enhance the practice of others. In addition, links to more effective practice have presented a more pragmatic argument for a holistic approach in terms of understanding the roots of the behaviour and how to address needs and risks.

Chapter 6 - Findings : Working with wider family and peers

Introduction

The influence of family and peers on young people who have sexually harmed is extensive, and includes positive and negative impacts from the past as well as potential for help or hindrance in avoiding future harm. The second main theme from the research, that of working with the wider family and peers will be presented in this chapter. Again, early stage quotations from interviews and the breadth survey will be used to introduce the theme before further findings from the analysis are shared. Five views of family influence will be described along a spectrum from seeing the family as the problem to seeing the family as the solution. The associated issues, challenges and implications in each of these areas will be discussed. Links to the literature presented in chapter two will be made throughout.

The influences and benefits of work with peers will also be addressed in this chapter, and similar positive, neutral and negative impacts will be demonstrated. Some issues relating to residential settings will be considered, along with the benefits and challenges of group work with young people who have sexually harmed. There will also be some consideration of preventative work within schools and with parents. Finally the discussion will turn again to researcher effects and limitations, exploring how well the researcher was able to access family and peers and be aware of these issues.

The emerging theme

In describing working holistically with this client group, the significance of the family and their influence was raised by many respondents before it was mentioned by the researcher. A senior staff member at the YOT explained (57):

> "to work holistically is, it's I mean the word fullness ... in terms of assessment, but also in terms of delivery ... you're looking at every aspect of child development and then it's almost like ripples round, you're looking at ...every aspect of that

> family and the changes and the impact, … looking with peers and other influences which obviously for young people is key".

This quotation raises a number of the key issues which will be addressed in this chapter. The emphasis on assessment as well as delivery will be explored as parents and family members are shown to be both people who have their own needs (which require assessment) but who can also contribute to the delivery of work with their young people. Parents and family members both have strong influences on the young people, and are influenced by the young people and their behaviour, so the 'impact' goes both ways. The additional strong influences from peers are also raised here and will be explored later in this chapter.

One therapist expressed the range of influences from family members, both positive and negative(62):

> "Winnicott's role of the child, the family and the outside world…that is central to how I work with children and young people. …They are themselves first, [then] whether they still live with their family or not, they still come from a family and *that family has an influence, for good, indifference or ill*"(my emphasis).

Part of understanding the influence of family members is clearly to do with recognising the historical influences on the young people. These influences can be complex and may be seen differently by various professionals involved with the family. However, the other major factor relates to involving family members and others in therapeutic engagement, as one worker from a voluntary agency explained (9):

> "We work holistically to varying degrees. We try to involve the young person's family and wider network and community where possible and appropriate. … We often fall short of working holistically, especially when we struggle to engage the family or indeed the social work teams. We seem to manage it best when we have a collection of key people who are willing to work positively with us and the child".

The involvement of other professionals will be addressed more thoroughly in the next chapter, but this range of meanings of 'working with' family is crucial within this theme. The needs of families and the importance of 'working with' them to help with these needs can be considered separately to the priority of 'working with' them, or alongside them to help their young people. Of course, this is often not an either/or distinction as

many families will benefit from intervention as well as being able to contribute to the intervention. The subdivisions of this theme are for the thorough consideration of the issue rather than any suggestion that a family will fit into one category. It is important to state that most families could be considered across several if not all of the subdivisions.

Key issues in working with wider family and peers

The analysis of interview transcript portions relating to work with wider family and peers yielded a number of key concepts, the most popular of which are listed below:

Figure 8. Key concepts regarding family and peers (repeated)

Vital to chip in with family (7)	Problems working with peers (5)
Family culture (6)	Behaviour affected family (4)
Family background (6)	Engagement (4)
Massive peer influence (6)	Context = community (4)
Complex history (6)	Impact on the family (4)
Challenges of relating with families (6)	Wider family assistance e.g. forms (4)
Roots of behaviour (5)	Challenges of home visits (4)
Prevention (5)	Some family members abusive/negative (4)
With family boosts effectiveness (5)	Distance from family (4)
Include family (5)	Improve relationships in family (4)
Need for family's support (5)	

The consideration of axial codes and thematic contrasts as shown in chapter four led to the selection of five main areas of family work, while the codes relating to peers were considered later. The diagram below shows the 'five views of family influence', with related issues and challenges. Many of the key concepts above are included within the five areas, either as part of defining the issues or below as part of related challenges. The primary function of the diagram is to illustrate the findings from the research and as such it should not be considered a definitive statement of family issues or needs. Insofar as it summarises the views of the professionals interviewed and surveyed, it can be considered a helpful insight into some of the challenges and issues facing professionals seeking to work with families where young people have sexually harmed others.

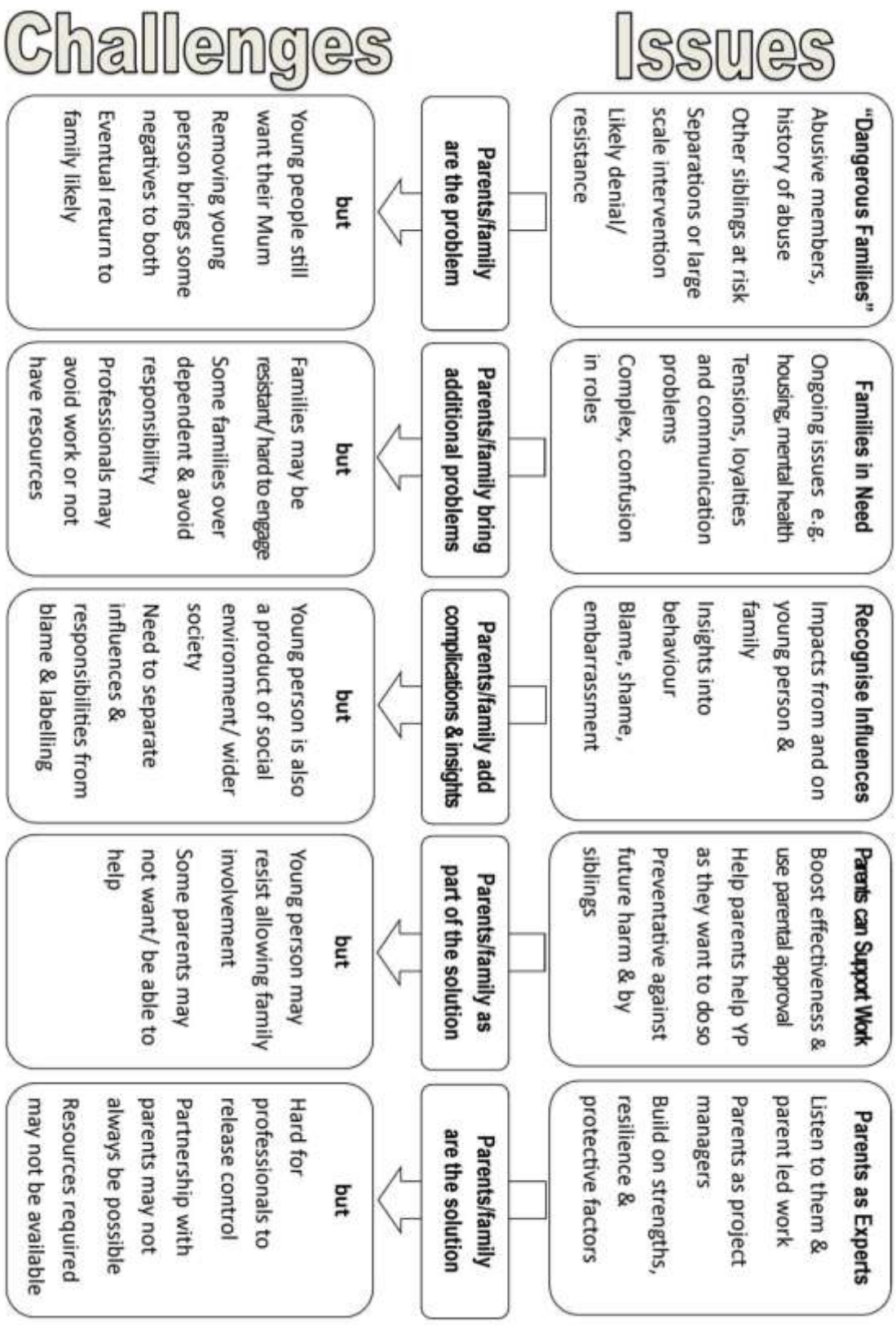

Figure 9. Five Views of Family Influence

As has been stated, the aim is not to categorise any family as falling into one of these five areas. Perhaps the areas could better be described as different ways professionals may view families, as they were derived predominantly from interviews with professionals. To give an extreme example, even a family considered 'dangerous' may contain a non-abusive parent who could act as an expert in directing work with that family, and this would bring both extremes of the diagram into play with the same family. The idea that parents are likely to be part of the problem and therefore part of the solution was cited earlier from Johnson & Doonan (2005). The role of families being part of the problem and part of the solution for *Children in Trouble* was also emphasised in this more general report (Hayden, 2007).

The central category, where families and young people are seen to impact each other in ways that can be positive and negative will be the case in virtually all situations, and this was the sub-theme raised most consistently across all interviewees. Either side of this category are sub-themes of Families in Need and Families who can Support Work, and these were the next most mentioned within the interviews. The level of need identified from the families or support offered by the families can be seen as moderate, and most families of young people who have sexually harmed will present some needs and some potential to support the young person. The extreme levels of need and support/control are represented by the "Dangerous Families" and Parents as Experts categories at each end of the diagram. Around half of those interviewed mentioned serious risks or histories of abuse within families while around a quarter talked about parents being the experts or needing to lead the work. Each of these areas will now be discussed below.

"Dangerous Families"

The title 'Dangerous Families' comes from a book written by Peter Dale and colleagues (Dale et al., 1986) which was referred to by one of the external therapists interviewed during the research who explained (62):

> "Young people have individual files so they are an individual ...[but] there's nobody who's seeing what's going on in these families as a whole, and structurally that's becoming I think harder and harder... there was a book written called *Dangerous Families* which I think was an important text in child

> protection work in the 80s. I think people have forgotten about it, but this lad's family is one of those, there's no question".

The book was an early example of a text which stressed systemic and inter-agency work in child protection, promoted the use of therapeutic teams and emphasised the importance of engagement. It took seriously the problems of dangerousness within some families and the way professionals could unintentionally contribute to abusive dynamics within families. The use of the term 'dangerous' might now be considered by some to be dated or labelling a family, but it is included as a reflection of the findings from the research, representing one way families may be viewed. While some young people who sexually harm are previously unknown to social services, there are other cases where large files (or drawers of files) exist detailing concerns, histories or suspicions of abuse, neglect or domestic violence within the young person's family. These complex family dynamics require consideration of risk both towards and from the young person who has sexually harmed. Questioning may bring up bad memories or family secrets which make the work more difficult for the young person and other family members, bringing likely denial and resistance. A social worker explains some of the issues (58):

> "I think it's imperative to work with the wider family, especially in, sexual abuse kind of cases where it's like ingrained on the family … Parents I've worked with who have been sexually abused, who then go on to sexually abuse or be the partner of somebody who then goes on to sexually abuse, … It's quite traumatic for them to bring up certain memories …, you find that it goes up the family chain quite a lot… there's a lot of secrets, and that's what's been in the background with those families".

Both of these professionals were involved with the case of one young person who featured prominently in the research. Following his abuse of his sister he was removed from the family; however, there had been previous concerns of physical abuse from his step-father. The young man's mother had previously been abused by her brother, and the maternal grandfather also had convictions for sexual offences. Following the removal of the young perpetrator from the family, social services ceased involvement with the rest of the family, drawing negative remarks from the judge involved at the time. By the time of the observation research, the family had been reallocated an

experienced social worker following further allegations of sexual abuse from the step-father.

The impression I gained from my observation was that the young person was just one cog in a system of abuse (c.f. Dale et al., 1986: p.202), and unlikely to have been the most dangerous part of the system. While the abuse he perpetrated was serious and required intervention, he had also been a victim of abuse, within the family but also from sexual exploitation he had been drawn into as he wandered the streets to avoid sexually harming his sister. Appropriate work with family members required a good multi-agency response, which was gradually coming together involving social workers, residential staff, therapists and YOT staff. This will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Concerns within families which can be considered 'dangerous' include risks to other siblings, risk of harm from the young person who has sexually harmed and risk to that young person. Previous incidents of abuse may mean that others in the family including adults have unresolved victim issues and would benefit from appropriate support. Families where parents deny the perpetrator's responsibility for the abuse, blame the victim, are unwilling to protect siblings or blame professionals for investigating the abuse fall into Bentovim's (1998: p.127) category of 'Hopeless Prognosis' and are suggested to be unlikely to respond to treatment. The subsequent strategy of 'containment' might be expected to include the removal of a young person to a specialist placement.

Removing a young person from their family may address some risks, but will introduce other challenges including the emotional impacts on all of separation. Gaps may be left which others in the family may fill in terms of being a victim or a perpetrator and there will be eventual challenges of reuniting the family, often after support structures have been removed. The challenge of exit plans was raised by a senior staff member at the YOT (57):

> "I'm slightly nervous about depositing children in bubbles for ages and ages and wondering what the exit plans are, ... I think back to ... another young person

> who was in [a residential home] for years and did so well and [the question of] sustainability out into the community when all kids want is their Mum however hopeless their Mum is, by and large".

This raises again the strong family influences and bonds, even in 'dangerous families' or families where a parent is unable to protect their children. Holistic work needs to recognise these dynamics and seek to address both needs and risks as they are identified, by engaging appropriately with families and involving others as will be necessary. Any families considered 'dangerous' could also be seen as families in need, and the findings in the next section will also be relevant. The implication above (from Bentovim, 1998) that some families are 'hopeless' or beyond treatment was not one mentioned in the YOT where the need for *someone* to engage with even the most troubled families was seen as vital. This has an obvious impact on resources, but also on potentially unrealistic expectations of other professionals.

Families in need

The concept of 'families in need' is related to the requirement under the Children Act (1989: s.17) that Local Authorities safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are 'in need' in their areas by provision of services for children, their families and others. Assessment of 'need' is defined in terms of being unlikely to achieve or maintain health (including mental health) and development (including physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development). This is secondary in priority to the criteria defined in section 47 of the same Act, which refers to children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, who in the five views diagram would likely be considered under the 'dangerous families' category.

Families of young people who have sexually harmed may experience a range of needs, which may have contributed to the sexual harm, be consequences of the sexual harm or be apparently unrelated to the sexual harm. Some of the needs mentioned by professionals and the parent interviewed included appropriate housing, mental health problems, parental relationship difficulties, poverty, parental offending, stigma from the local community, health needs of siblings and other behavioural problems. One YOT worker explained (74):

> "the complexity of some of our families is massive. … What tends to happen is that 27 agencies say, are involved with a family… They go along to the house, and they find the parents aren't in, and so they don't go back, or they sit there and listen to the story and it's too overwhelming and they back off. The challenge is to work out how we can actually meet those families' needs, because … they're used to being assessed but not being provided for, I think".

Here again the involvement of other agencies is key, as will be found in the following chapter. Another YOT staff member described how a new young person at the YOT may have needed family intervention for some time but no other professionals have taken this up. She related (68):

> "just recently a young person that's had a final warning, the mum has cried out for years for help from social services, and she's got nowhere, basically, and maybe if she'd had some help as the young person was growing up, … we might not even be in the position where her son's got a final warning".

A lack of early provision for struggling parents followed by overwhelming later intervention by multiple agencies was highlighted in the HM Treasury/ DfES (2007) report *Aiming high for children: supporting families*.

In addition to challenges in the multi-agency arena, other challenges are presented by the families themselves. The complex needs described above understandably contribute to stress and less effective parenting and may lead parents to feel or be seen as failures (Payne, 2003). This worker had previously suggested that parents can be the main barrier, as will be seen below (68):

> "[Some parents] don't respond to the work we're trying to do with their young people. Often you've found parents who will collude with their young person…It might be easier for them as a parent to ring up the Youth Offending Team to say that their young person is sick, rather than actually have the battle with their child to actually get them to the Youth Offending Team's office, so often parents are the main barrier. We've also got parents that choose to have no part of the process, and that can be very difficult for the child".

Placing some responsibility for the behaviour of young people on their parents has a long history (e.g. Children Bill, 1908) and the increasing recognition of work that involves the family system such as Multi-systemic therapy (Letourneau & Borduin, 2008) could be said to build on this premise indirectly. However, there is less coverage in the literature

endorsing work with family members to address the problems that contribute to sexual harm by young people, perhaps because the most effective interventions would have taken place before the sexual harm occurred, and it could be considered 'too late'. Family systemic approaches recommend therapeutic work:

> 'reversing the traumatic impact of family life on young perpetrators, as well as supporting the safe behaviour of the young perpetrator' (Bentovim, 1998: p.125).

This family therapy approach is not available to the majority of young people who have sexually harmed and was not an option for any young people at the YOT. Often work with young people addresses these problems and seeks to help the young person in light of family impacts (e.g. Durham, 2006). However, the need for young people to accept responsibility for their own behaviour seems to have ruled out much allocation of responsibility to parents, unless the children are particularly young (Johnson & Doonan, 2005). The frequency of difficulties from parents observed within the YOT placement suggests that this is an area needing further research.

In contrast to some families who are resistant to the work or hard to engage, other families can be seen as over-dependent on support services. One YOT worker described how (66):

> "you do have families, who do exaggerate and blow up things that aren't really there because they're already dependent and they live in chaos and … they like having all these services round them… I think that's when multi-agency can fall down, when you have these families who have all these agencies and … it's like the family's in control, at some points … I think sometimes you need very targeted, specific pieces of work, and then to go back and evaluate what else needs to be done and I think exit strategies need to be written up".

Here the worker considers the family being in control as a bad thing, and the contrast between this and the right hand category of 'Parents as Experts' needs to be considered. There is clearly a balance to be struck between facilitating the parents to have agency and take an appropriate lead in directing the care of their children while recognising when they are avoiding responsibility or are unable to make effective choices. In these circumstances, the need for targeted and specific work is highlighted, which may be in contrast to all-encompassing holistic approaches.

Recognise influences both ways

The central category represents the overall strong influences of the young person's family and from the young person to their family, both positive and negative. As is demonstrated in the systems diagrams which place the young person within a family system before anything else, these are usually the most influential people in a young person's life and those most affected by the young person's behaviour. One YOT worker explained (67):

> "they're part of a family, they have relationships with other people who have an impact on them and vice versa, … the wider family and peers is part of seeing that person within the context of their own lives".

As with seeing the whole young person, understanding a young person's family background and context can give insights into their behaviour and the roots of what has happened which can help inform the work needed. The two panel members interviewed also demonstrated how the family are affected by the young person's behaviour as well as influencing it (64/65):

> Panel Member 1 "sometimes … the young lad or the young girl has a short fuse, a short temper, and they take it out on their family, their nearest and dearest… "

> Panel Member 2 "also it works the other way round, the family, and the way they operate, parents in particular, will cause the person to develop some learned behaviour that follows the pattern of either father or grandfather or mother".

The influence of family patterns connects with the histories of abuse which may be present in some 'dangerous families', but similar patterns may exist in terms of other offending behaviour or ways of dealing with difficulties. The effects of behaviour on the family can be extreme, especially when the victim of sexual abuse is within the same family.

The parent interviewed was the step-mother of a young person who had sexually harmed, but shared more from her experience as the mother of the victim. The incident of sexual harm, and the father's response had led to the break-up of her marriage, considerable housing and neighbourhood problems as well as the emotional effects on her and her daughter. She shared (56):

> "I still now, I feel angry about it all, because of, I feel [my step-son] got away with what he did, even though he had a final warning, to me it was nothing, because to me, he's still walking around, living his life, … I've lived with several people in the past year, just to get away from the house … [My ex-husband's] not had to move any of his kids' schools, his work or, anything like that, and I've had to move everything … we'd only been married six months, but he wasn't prepared to send his son … to live with his mum, so me and him could sort it out, so, it was the end of us".

The effects from the young person's behaviour on the family in this case were far-reaching, while in other cases it may be other families which are affected around a victim. The importance of work to help the victim will be discussed further elsewhere but it is necessary to recognise that often the victim and the perpetrator are within the same family (Hackett et al., 1998).

The presence of siblings in the family presents perhaps the strongest argument for parenting support which will assist not only the young perpetrator but any siblings who might be at risk of acting out sexually, either influenced as a victim or by the same family environment which contributed to the sexual harm. Even if the young person who has sexually harmed is removed from the family or leaves, it may not be too late to support parents to change the home environment and parenting of other children. Programmes such as Triple P (Sanders et al., 2003) were found to be useful by staff at the YOT. However, the success of even the most evidence-based parenting programmes also depends on the societal everyday stresses which affect families (Barth, 2009).

While parenting support should bring benefits for the young person, positive work with a young person should also bring positive changes for the family, in terms of improved behaviour and family relationships. Positive influences from family members form significant reasons for involving the family in helping the young person, as will be addressed in the following category. It has been shown in this section that family members contribute both positive and negative influences on young people. However, it is also necessary to stress that families are not the only significant impacts on a young person. A range of other influences including peers and the wider social environment can give negative messages about sexuality and masculinity as described in Durham (2006). Other significant impacts might be expected from cultural influences as

suggested by Warne (2005), but this was not a key finding within this research; likely due to the predominantly White British participants from the city and YOT.

Parents/ family can support work

Moving on to more of the positive impact that family members can bring, this category emphasises the way family members can contribute to helping the young person address and change harmful sexual behaviour. One YOT worker described the comparative time the young person spends with the family compared to at the YOT (54):

> "if any agency thinks that they can work in isolation, without getting [important family members] on board, then they're kidding themselves because if you're going to see someone twice a week for half an hour, or an hour, and you think that that's going to impact on 15 years of entrenched behaviour then, that's not going to happen, so that's why wider family is important".

This utilising of the positive effects of the family is perhaps seen most explicitly in Multi-Systemic Therapy (Letourneau & Swenson, 2005) where virtually no direct work is done by the therapist with the young person. Instead the therapist teaches the parents to deliver evidence based interventions within the home environment.

The assumption that parents and family members want to support their young person, and can be assisted to do this was expressed by one experienced YOT worker (74):

> "I don't know any parents that don't want to be better parents … the majority of people who are struggling, and with child abuse, they don't want to be doing it, they want to be doing things better, so once you harness that motivation and energy, they will work incredibly hard for things to change in the home".

Several workers did talk about parents simply in terms of people who can encourage the young person to attend YOT appointments, but further involvement was generally seen as desirable though time consuming. The YOT had a specific parenting team which was mentioned by some interviewees as a useful resource although perhaps not utilised as regularly as could have been beneficial. Even within the YOT building this comes into issues of multi-agency working and will be addressed further in the following chapter.

In addition to reluctance from some professionals to involve parents, the family members and the young people themselves may also resist this participation. One member of staff at a residential placement explained (60):

> "[We try] to involve the family with the work … and also, empower the parents, involve them in the therapeutic sessions, which helps them maybe understand… because a lot of support can come from the parents if the parents are onside with you … If the family's not working with you, it can be very hard if you're telling a young person, "this is what you need to do, you know, and this is what we're aiming for", and then he goes and sees his parents and they say, "no, you don't want to do that, you want to be doing this" - straight away that puts that young person in a tug of war."

One of the two young people who were interviewed agreed that some talking to parents was necessary for workers to see the whole picture, but both were less keen for further involvement with their families. Other young people discussed within the YOT setting had expressed particular wishes for their family members not to be involved at all and these wishes were generally respected if the young person was over sixteen. Here the tension between an attitude of respect for the young person and what is most holistically effective can be seen. Further research could be useful in uncovering what family support young people would find helpful, and ways of empowering them to build more beneficial relationships which also promote independence and autonomy.

Parents as experts

The final category of parent and family involvement was mentioned by fewer interviewees, but represents the idea that parents are the experts in working with their young people and that work should empower them and be led by them. One experienced YOT worker shared (51):

> "I do think you have to be careful [not to over-intervene], I completely agree with that. Most families can sort their own kids out; I believe that parents are the experts".

While there are obvious challenges in cases where parents have been abusive or neglectful, recognising parents as long-term witnesses to their young people's lives and behaviour will generally make a strong argument for including their opinions in tackling

problems. Some professionals went further to say that the parents should be taking the lead role, but that they may need help to achieve this. One YOT worker explored the metaphor of support for parents being like scaffolding for a building (74):

> "Making sure that [parents] can manage the support [given] - is this support supportive? Is it scaffolding, or is it so oppressive that it's making the building crumble even more? So then you put the scaffolding poles in place, with their consent, because they may not, if they're very low in mood, may not be able to do that for themselves, sort of gradually getting them to manage the whole project management thing of their family for themselves, and just helping them to go into the right direction, and then gradually removing the scaffolding poles".

The worker explored this idea of parents 'project managing' their own families, and encouraging them to take the lead in decision making, but she also acknowledged the significant concern for all YOT staff of risk within the family (74):

> "You've always got the caveat of risk, so assume risk's been dealt with, [after that] I would ask the family what would be your priority?"

This balance of addressing risk while seeking to empower parents is a challenge, particularly when families may also be considered within the 'Dangerous Families' category above. However, even within an abusive family there may be a non-abusing adult who can be assisted to take on a more leading role once steps have been taken to safeguard the family.

While partnership with parents is an aim in many areas of child protection work (DH, 1995b), it is not always found to be achievable (Bell, 1999). One external therapist explained:

> "[The Department of Health] presented a model of partnership as always being possible … my clinical experience then and now … I will always seek a degree of partnership, but I want to be and need to be constructively critical about what degree of partnership it is possible to establish or possible to expect".

This staff member advocated a more realistic view of parental participation and supports Bell's (1999) view that full partnership with parents is rare in cases where family members deny abuse or disagree with judgements of their parenting. Giving too much control to parents where they have previously misused or abused control may be an irresponsible abdication of professional responsibility. A degree of partnership

suggested by the worker above might include empowering parents by helping them to improve their parenting skills and find ways of managing problematic behaviour.

Setting up increased involvement from family members does bring further challenges, as expressed by one YOT worker (67):

> "If you can involve the family that's been a huge impact and again, it's time consuming. It's maybe taking people into an area that they are less comfortable with. The power difference shifts, from professional to young person, professional to adult... It's ... harder to control your cases and the appointments ... When you muddy the water with other factors ... there's more things that can go wrong".

These issues of control and clear resistance to the family being in control were raised by the quotation from Interviewee 66 under the 'Families in Need' section above. The impact on a YOT worker's workload of regular home visits and involving the parents was an on-going discussion within the YOT, and specific teams existed and were in development with smaller caseloads to allow this work to allow more of a 'wraparound' service for the most needy young people.

Peer influence and impact

Consideration of themes relating to peers yielded some similar themes to those regarding family members. It has already been stated that peers can be considered the other most local system surrounding young people, and they can similarly be viewed as influences for good, indifference or ill. A similar boxes diagram is included below to summarise the findings relating to the influences of peers on young people who have sexually harmed others:

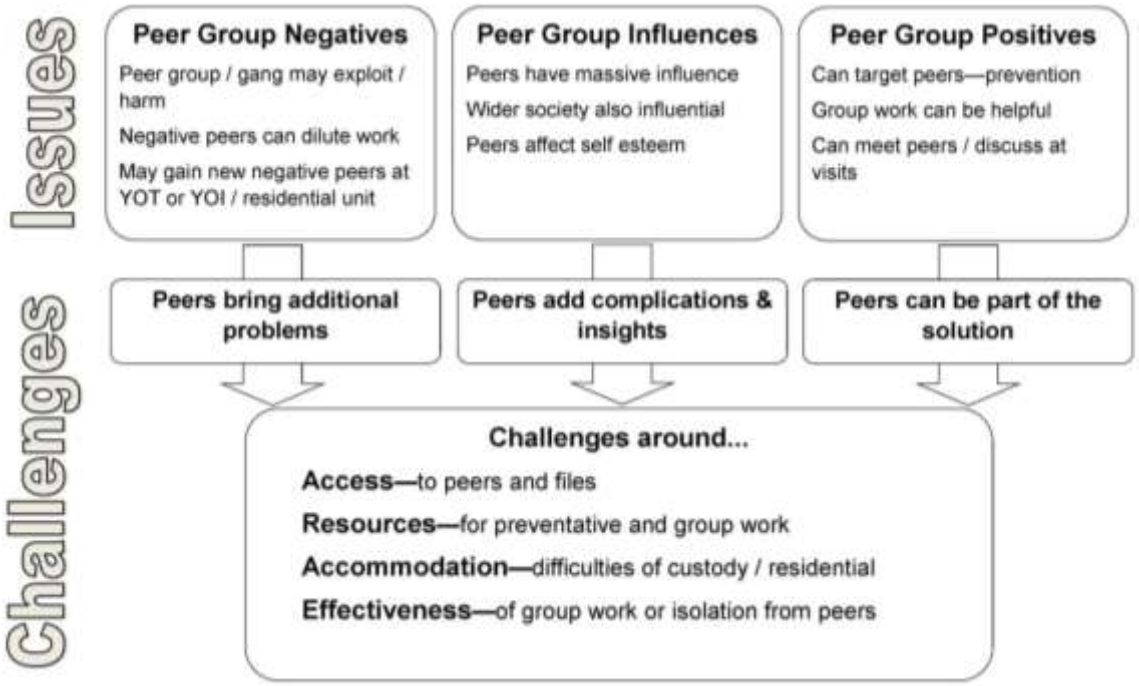

Figure 10. Views of Peer Influence

The influence of peers was recognised by professionals as another pervasive factor affecting the attitudes and behaviour of young people, but to a lesser extent than families. One YOT worker summarised (63):

> "I might spend forty minutes every two weeks with a young person on a referral order; that young person is spending every day of their life with their peers, and they'll have a far greater influence on them possibly than me. So yeah, wherever I can, … I … get to know a little bit more about the peer group".

Getting to know more about the peers was another reason given supporting the use of home visits, as workers may encounter other local young people within or around the household. Young people were advised not to bring friends with them to YOT appointments as this caused trouble in the waiting area at times. One YOT worker described the difficulty of addressing negative peer influences (52):

> "That's one of the biggest things you find that, you know, you can't change the fact that 'Jimmy' only knows people who commit crime. You can never change your peer group; you can only change how you respond to them and how you see their behaviour as well".

Although other workers might argue that a young person can change their peer group, the use of custody or secure residential settings might be an explicit way of doing this, as young people are removed from their local area. Unfortunately the drawback of this was also expressed by workers who described the negative influences of new peers within custodial or residential settings. Another worker described how after a period in custody, the only friends to welcome a young person were their old negative peers.

Group work with young people who have sexually harmed had previously been offered within the placement setting but was not taking place at the time of the observation. Lower numbers of young people who had sexually harmed meant that suitable groups were not readily conceivable, although the young man in a specialist residential setting would likely receive group work at a later date. The benefits and implications of group working have already been discussed in the literature review, chapter two.

Some staff found the idea of working with peers to be not possible, since gaining access to non-offending young people or their personal information is limited. However, more general work with peers could be envisaged within preventative work, as described by one YOT worker (51):

> "in an ideal world, my job for example could encompass going into schools, talking to young people, making sure they're aware …, often kids don't even know what the rules are, and what the boundaries are, and what the legal rules are, and I think particularly nowadays, more and more they are bombarded with messages about sex through the media".

The reason this needed to be in an ideal world was again linked to time and resource pressures. Preventative work with parents and peers is subject to funding, time and staffing levels, as will be described further in the following chapter.

Researcher effects and limitations – restrictions to family and peer involvement

The limited access to family members and no access to peers within the research both restricted the view of this area of work that was possible. As within the service, when

parents are unwilling or unable to be involved this limits what can be seen of a young person's family situation. Interviews with the family members of the two young interviewees were not possible due to one parent declining and another young person being unwilling to involve their family. Further attempts were not made as staff within the YOT advised this would not be in the parents' best interests. One parent did not attend the multi-agency case review as expected claiming illness although this was questioned by staff who had known her to avoid other meetings in this way. The parent who was interviewed was keen to share her story and this was taken up following consultation with YOT and university staff.

Even without direct contact with family and peers, their importance in work with young people who have sexually harmed came across strongly, although the related challenges and implications are understandably framed by the views of professionals who were the main research subjects. Further challenges could be investigated within future research working more closely with family members, in particular the experience of intensive family support as offered by newer teams. Hearing some of the abusive and neglectful backgrounds of some of the young people did affect my attitude towards some parents, and the overall impression was one of families adding problems more than contributing to solutions. However, the research focus on more concerning and needy young people meant that I heard less about parents of lower concern young people who might generally have been more supportive and less 'dangerous'.

Chapter 7 - Findings : Working in a Multi-Agency way

Introduction

The involvement of several different agencies in cases where young people have sexually harmed is largely essential, but multi-agency and interagency working adds a number of challenges and implications to this aspect of a holistic approach. The third main theme from the research, namely working in a multi-agency way will be presented in this chapter. The topic will be introduced using early stage quotations from interviews and the breadth survey and then further findings from the analysis will be shared. These will include observations from the multi-agency environment of the Youth Offending Team placement setting, and the set-up of such teams will be discussed. Three sub-themes will be presented: Values, Clarity and Resources. Associated issues, challenges and implications in each of these areas will also be discussed. Links to the literature presented in chapter two will be made throughout. Disadvantages of multi-agency working will briefly be presented, and the effects of bias on the researcher from the local team will also be included.

The emerging theme

When asked about working holistically with this client group, some respondents began by emphasising the need for a multi-agency approach before this topic was mentioned by the researcher. One respondent from the breadth survey answered the question about whether the team worked holistically as follows (10):

> "Absolutely. We are a multi-agency team including police, health, social care and education, and all work together to bring about positive outcomes for young people, whilst ensuring that the safety of the public is also addressed."

The set up and obligations of Youth Offending Teams to work in a multi-agency way will be discussed early in this chapter. This respondent also stressed outcomes for young people which will be seen to be part of the *Every Child Matters* agenda (Chief Secretary

to the Treasury, 2003) representing key aims for professionals working with children and young people. For some, the need to see the whole young person and their context led on to the range of workers who can contribute to this, as one YOT worker described (70):

> "we look at all the context in terms of all the family, the community aspects, and … the beauty of working as a multi-agency [team], there are a whole range of professionals, i.e. education and health, and I actually find *that* a holistic approach. So, we're not seeking to work with the young person on one specific area, we're working on a multitude of areas".

The segments diagram (Figure 5) which showed the whole young person will be reconsidered in this chapter in relation to the different workers and agencies who may need to be involved to see the whole young person.

Many of the key issues and challenges relating to multi-agency working were presented by a police officer at the YOT who explained (55):

> "I'd say [my] team [work holistically]…,in terms of, resources are shared, the actual geography if you like … all in a cluster together so they actually talk to each other, bounce ideas off each other and seek advice and clarification from each other… My interpretation of working holistically is working for the same outcomes, but also … the way you're working is to actually achieve those outcomes…. If you're going to work holistically then obviously then communication is essential to that as a process. Collaboration in terms of, it could be resources, it could be in terms of shared best practice."

These issues of resources, clarity and shared values will be explored in terms of both the benefits and challenges of multi-agency working.

The range of agencies addressing a range of needs

Seeing the whole young person has already been described as recognising a range of segments, while acknowledging how the integrated whole is more than the sum of parts. Typically different agencies have interests in specific areas of a young person's life and development, and targets relating to these areas. A Youth Offending Team is by definition multi-agency, and can be made up of seconded staff members from other agencies, directly employed members with specific professional identities from previous

employment, more generic staff who may have mainly worked within the YOT environment and volunteers from a range of backgrounds. In relation to the segments in Figure 5/11 repeated below, staff members may identify particular responsibility towards addressing needs in one or more segments. Social work trained staff should be familiar with a responsibility to assess all of these segments, and the Asset assessment also reviews each of these areas for criminogenic needs. For all staff, the stated main priority within a YOT is the focus on preventing offending (Crime & Disorder Act, 1998: s.37), located in the behavioural development segment.

Figure 11. Connected Segments to See the Whole Young Person who has Sexually Harmed (repeated)

The table below draws out key professionals who may be involved in addressing developmental needs within each segment, and targets as set out by the *Every Child Matters* Green Paper (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003).

Table 11. *Every Child Matters* Targets for Key Professional Groupings

Segment	**Key Professionals**	**Targets (from *Every Child Matters*, 2003)**
Health	GP, Health visitor, School nurses	Increasing access to primary health care & specialist health services
Emotional/Social Development	Counsellors, Guidance staff, Social workers	Supporting victims, homeless & new arrivals
Family & Social Relationships	Social workers, Family workers	Ensuring children are safe, have a Sure Start and tackling child poverty
Identity	Spiritual leaders, youth & community workers	Building strong and vibrant communities
Behavioural Development	YOT staff, Police, School discipline	Tackling bullying, reducing offending and anti-social behaviour
Learning	School staff, other Education workers	Raising primary & secondary school standards & post-16 learning
Self Care Skills	Connexions staff, youth workers, mentors	Increased education, training and better transition to adulthood

The Youth Offending Team studied included health professionals, social workers, police, education workers, family workers and Connexions staff as well as more generic staff from a youth work or youth justice background. In set up, the team was truly multi-agency and staff needed to hold the targets and priorities of their own profession alongside the general YOT priority of preventing offending. The question of whether the YOT studied was multi-agency or a more blended inter-agency team connects to ideas raised by Burnett & Appleton (2004) regarding a fruit salad or fruit cake style combination or types of collaboration compared by Gregson (1992). In observation some professionals were found to retain their professional identity more strongly than others who seemed keen to be part of a more blended approach. It could be said that this YOT fruit cake had some large, identifiable chunks of fruit in it.

In practice, the team faced a number of challenges in multi-agency working within the building and with other local agencies which were witnessed in observation of practice, meetings and in interviews.

Key issues in multi-agency working

The analysis of interview transcript portions relating to multi-agency working yielded a number of key concepts, the most popular of which are listed below:

Figure 12. Key concepts regarding Multi-Agency Working

Resources (7)	Priorities (3)	Liaising (3)
Communication (5)	Balance (3)	Expertise (3)
Outcomes (5)	Education (3)	Duty (3)
Child centred (5)	Values (3)	Funding (3)
MAPPA (5)	Frustrating (3)	Together (3)
Relationship (4)	Stress (3)	Targets (3)
Experience (4)	Crucial (3)	Safe (3)
System (4)	Role (3)	

These concepts were considered in terms of axial codes, which included contrasts between clear open dialogue and muddy, blocked and undermining relationships; sharing values and aims and valuing differences in ethos; and prioritising funding for specialist care for highest risk cases or wider improvements in care for all young people.

The *Childhood Lost* report (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001) recognised that:

> 'if solving difficulties in inter-agency communication was an easy matter, the problems would have been solved a long time ago' (p. 63).

Communication between agencies is central to this chapter, but it is considered under the wider theme of clarity. The need is for *effective* communication, which relies on clear transfer of information and knowledge as well as clear understanding of roles and responsibilities for using this information. Adding in the way that staff from other agencies can assist in seeing the whole young person, clarity can be seen as the primary aim within multi-agency working, and lack of clarity as one of the main challenges.

The other two main themes of values and resources can be seen as representing challenges to effective multi-agency working, but as central issues they are also key components of when multi-agency working goes well. A lack of shared values, and conflicting aims and priorities constrain successful multi-agency working. Similarly the lack of sufficient resources in terms of funding, expertise and time also hinder effective multi-agency working. In contrast, positive multi-agency working should contribute to more shared values and a better use of resources.

The three sub-themes are presented in Figure 13 below, which identifies a number of key points from each of the topics of Values, Clarity and Resources. These will be further addressed below.

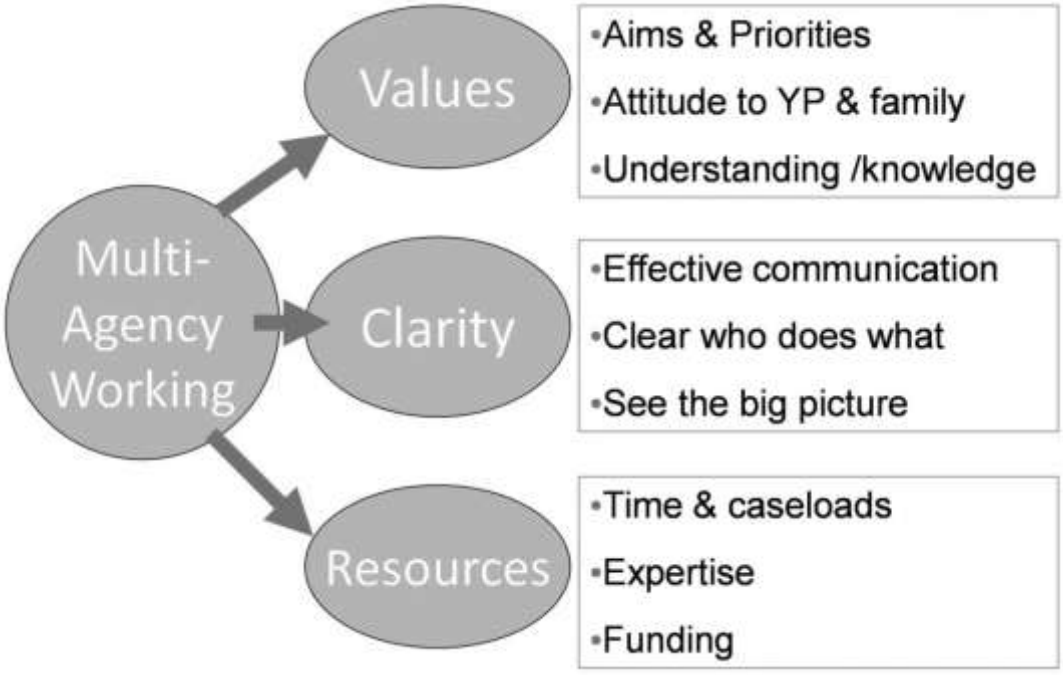

Figure 13. Multi-Agency Working Sub-themes

The literature review in chapter two presented a wide range of challenges presented by other authors relating to multi-agency working in child protection and with those who have sexually harmed. While these cannot all be explored in detail here the connections to the three sub-themes were made on the side-bar in Table 3, p.64. This section of the literature review was conducted following the analysis, after the theme of multi-agency working had been clearly identified. The validity of this part of the study is supported by

the replication of many of the key challenges and success factors found by Atkinson et al. (2005) and others.

Values - Aims and Objectives

Several of the key concepts listed above can be considered to relate to this theme of values, specifically those of having a child-centred approach, a focus on relationship, questions of priorities and issues of duty, safety and targets. A number of the challenges identified in the literature also can be connected to this theme, most clearly from Charles & Stevenson (1990). One senior staff member shared the opinion (57):

> "I think one of the problems with holistic working, if you're looking at the multi-agency bit is everybody having different aims and objectives. So actually my aim and objective is to reduce risk of harm; whereas [for] other people sat round [in a meeting] it would be to get them into education… and I think 'oh shut up banging on about education, the most important thing is [reducing risk of harm]'".

This frank admission of frustration with some of the priorities held by other professionals was also witnessed on other occasions of observation and in comments following review meetings. Table 11 above indicates how different professionals are required to work to different targets, and this influence from managerialist approaches is seen in social work, education and youth justice. The need to somehow work to a shared purpose was also described by another YOT worker (67):

> "Multi-agency working is more than putting different people in different agencies in one building and saying there you are, look, we're multi-agency, [it's] about having a shared sense of purpose, and where everybody feels that they can contribute. You don't have to all necessarily agree with each other on every detail, but … have a shared sense of where we're trying to get. [It's important] that we're not conflicting so badly that the young person, like with two parents, is getting one message from one worker, and a completely conflicting one from another… I think real, true partnership, multi-agency working is rare".

There is an expectation that all staff working with young people will share some values, demonstrated by the *Common Core*:

> 'The common core reflects a set of common values for practitioners that promote equality, respect diversity and challenge stereotypes. It helps to improve life

> chances for all children and young people, including those who have disabilities and those who are most vulnerable.' (CWDC, 2010b: p.2)

These shared values, also expressed as improving outcomes for children and young people in the *Every Child Matters* (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003) Green Paper should underpin all practice. However, more specific targets identified above lead to different priorities.

Various challenges of multi-agency working were witnessed within the observation setting, from the need to improve liaison with CAMHS staff to difficulties engaging other agencies to be involved with early intervention panels and groups addressing sexual exploitation. In each of these areas some positive change was seen when different groups managed to agree priorities and when one individual or more took the initiative to champion a particular issue.

Values - Attitudes to young people and families

An interesting insight into the multi-agency dynamic was offered by the two young people interviewed. One had the definite opinion that the Police were in charge and made all the decisions about his case and treatment. This opinion seemed to be shared by the parent who was also interviewed. In contrast the other young person interviewed took the view that he had significant participation in the decisions, in conjunction with YOT management.

Different attitudes to young people and families have already been mentioned in the previous chapters in terms of work with families and seeing the whole young person. While professionals from social work, police, probation and health might be expected to have different ideas about families and young people, working together with very differently-minded staff brings a number of challenges. The need for more training was raised by professionals interviewed here and in the Hackett et al. (2003) study. This could also be expected to increase the understanding and knowledge of staff from different agencies.

Values - Understanding and knowledge

One example of a difficult inter-agency relationship was witnessed in a telephone call involving a YOT staff member. Another professional connected with the leaving care team approached a YOT worker requesting a 'risk assessment' for a YOT client. The external professional's unwillingness to read the case file was experienced as deeply frustrating by the YOT worker. Doubtless the external professional was trying to save time and prioritise but the complexities of risk assessment, specifically the contextual issues involved perhaps in future accommodation would require consideration of a range of issues from the client's case file and not the mundane reproduction of a standard YOT document. The YOT worker may well have been a useful colleague to contribute to any risk assessment, but the expectation that risk issues are the domain of any one professional exposes a lack of understanding of risk and multi-agency working with concerning young people. However, sharing responsibility leads to other needs for clarity, as will now be addressed.

Clarity - Effective communication

The idea of clarity as the umbrella theme for issues of communication and responsibilities was raised above, and is demonstrated as the need for things to be 'clear' by a social worker who explained (53):

> "This is why you need multi-agency working because one person can't do everything, and you have to be very clear. On the one hand you need to work together closely and communicate; you also have to be clear what areas you're working on so you don't double up on areas, so you don't miss something".

Clear communication necessarily involves good information sharing, both in the early assessment stages where professionals from different agencies need to contribute to building up the full and historical picture of the young person's situation, and also during the on-going intervention stage as new information and developments come to light.

As more people and agencies become involved, the potential for actions, intentions and responsibilities to be unclear or confusing for the young person, family members and the professionals themselves greatly increases. One of the most important matters to communicate is who is taking responsibility for action; one of the demonstrated failings during the Victoria Climbié case (Reder & Duncan, 2003).

Clarity - Clear roles and responsibilities : 'who does what'

The danger of professionals 'missing something', or a young person falling through a 'gap in the net' is what has linked criticism of poor multi-agency working to so many inquiries and serious case reviews. One experienced YOT worker summarised the contrasts in multi-agency working in child protection (74):

> "The whole working together of child protection: when it works well, it's brilliant, and when it doesn't, it ends up in a child being killed. … it's being clear about what you're responsible for, and doing, and making sure that other people … are doing their bit as well".

The questions of 'who holds responsibility for what' are connected to the 'aims and priorities' section under Values above, as well as bringing in the diverse and confusing legislation regarding young people who have sexually harmed. The importance of clear roles, recognition of role overlap and improvements in role relations were findings of Hallett (1995) during the development of Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs). Launching the Government Safeguarding Delivery Unit in May 2009, Ed Balls the Children's Secretary stated:

> "Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility, it is not just the job of social workers or the Government (Balls, 2009 in Daily Telegraph, 06/05/09)".

As was seen in chapter two, responsibility for young people who have sexually harmed was allocated by different branches of Government to ACPCs, now Local Child Safeguarding Boards or to Youth Offending Teams (Calder, 2001). Both of these bodies are themselves multi-agency in structure, and holding a multi-agency team responsible theoretically shares the risk and obligations. In practice, holding everyone responsible is not always effective, as in the parable of unknown origin when 'Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done' (e.g. Zimmer, 2009).

Perhaps the Government should also be considered a multi-agency body, since the Department of Health, Home Office, Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board should all be contributing to the Cross-Government Framework (formerly Strategy) for young people who sexually abuse. Nine years after the *Childhood Lost* (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001) report, this is still pending, leaving the Government in a precarious, 'glass-house' position when it comes to criticising multi-agency efficiency. Further delays may be expected as the new Government further alters priorities.

In the absence of clear national leadership, local agencies develop their own protocols and policies and seek to work together as required. The team observed had a local Assessment and Early Intervention Panel in place to review cases of sexual harm, both recent reported crimes and referrals from outside the youth justice service. One meeting attended by the researcher involved the case of a fifteen year old accused of multiple rapes with two older co-accused. There were concerns that this was part of a gang initiation, but the case was unlikely to proceed as the victim had withdrawn out of fear. Social work staff and YOT staff discussed the removal of the young person from his home and other siblings and his mother's unwillingness to discuss the allegation. Recommendations were made regarding the Child Protection Plan, Targeted Support for the mother and the Risk Management Plan within the YOT, including possible consideration by MAPPA (see next paragraph). The meeting was due to be chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer, but she had failed to attend other recent meetings and barely contributed. Although not prioritised by her agency, the Panel seemed an important forum for discussing concerning young people who might not otherwise be known to services.

Clarity - Seeing the big picture

The sub-theme of seeing the big picture incorporates both strategic agency actions and seeing the whole young person, linking back to the first main theme. In terms of addressing wider societal issues of sexual harm and public protection, a holistic view could be expected to consider much more than just the individual. The MAPPA, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements were considered highly within the YOT, both as

a forum for shared responsibility for risk assessment and public protection, but also as a way to access resources for the most serious cases. Attended by senior staff from involved agencies, MAPPA have the authority to recommend financial and specialist input for young people who have sexually harmed if they are considered high enough risk to be discussed. While dangerous adult offenders might more typically be subject to MAPPA procedures, high concern young people will be included if they are registered sex offenders, if they have received a custodial sentence of over 12 months for a sexual or violent offence or if they have committed an offence and are 'considered by the Responsible Authority [Chief Officer of Police and local Probation Board] to pose a risk of serious harm to the public' (Home Office, 2003a: p.18; see also National MAPPA Team, 2009). This last category, Category 3, should include any other young people who are considered high risk through the YOT Risk Of Serious Harm assessment, although Sutherland & Jones (2008) found a number of inconsistencies in MAPPA involvement with youth justice cases.

Good information sharing within multi-agency forums such as the MAPPA, Looked After Child reviews and Social Work Core Groups should also allow a bigger picture of the individual young person to be seen. One YOT worker shared (52):

> "There could be a number of … agencies working with any young person at any one time, … you're getting different insights into that young person, … How that young person operates in school, might be completely different to how they're operating when they're in a youth club… it just builds up the bigger picture of that young person".

Here different agencies are seen to contribute to the full view of the whole young person, as discussed in chapter five. These themes must be viewed together in order to give a holistic approach to working with young people who have sexually harmed.

Resources - Time and caseloads

The general concept of resources will be considered specifically to include issues of funding, worker time and caseloads and access to expertise. Resources, funding and expertise were among the key concepts above, while issues relating to caseloads and

available time were mentioned over more scattered categories and may well also relate to some of the stress and frustration key concepts.

The general resource pressures faced by social services were mentioned by some staff, including a YOT worker who explained (68):

> "I think because of the resources available to social services and children's services as a whole, they tend to work with young people who are at definite risk of serious harm. So their thresholds are very high before they have got the ability to work with families".

This tendency to work only with young people at the most risk is characterised by Munro & Calder (2005) as part of the pre-*Every Child Matters* Child Protection agenda. While the more recent safeguarding focus seeks to prioritise preventative work, experience on the ground is still one where more general family support is rarely offered.

A lack of resources within the wider multi-agency environment is seen to impact the work that can be done with families. The priority of working with the young person at risk is separated from a response to the family, even when there may be other siblings at risk within the same family. This was seen in cases where a young perpetrator's removal from a family led to the withdrawal of social services support from the rest of the family. In the cases studied, this appeared to be management led rather than a case-worker decision.

Resources - Access to Expertise

Further resource based challenges can be seen in the access that young people have to specialist treatment regarding sexual harm. One young person studied had gained a specialist external placement, but this was frequently mentioned to be unusual and a particular achievement of the staff involved. The access to the specialist placement was credited to a particularly tenacious social worker and the appearance of escalating behaviour within a local residential unit which brought police, residential staff, social workers and the YOT together in seeking an external placement. Another factor was this young person's willingness to engage in therapeutic work. Case notes of another more

vulnerable and concerning young person within the YOT showed that his brief external placement had broken down following his aggression to staff and inappropriate behaviour. The availability of resources in this case was linked not only to need but to the ability of the young person to comply with the placement conditions. In his case, the multi-agency team struggled to keep up with the complex needs and risks presented by a young person who frequently absconded, was involved with inappropriate adults and known sex offenders, was removed from the school roll (after the sexual offence became known) and saw a number of therapists following suicide attempts and other victim issues.

Young people in Young Offenders Institutes (YOIs) also rarely accessed specialist treatment regarding sexual harm, as one YOT worker described (73):

> "I've got one young person at a prison at the moment who doesn't have convictions for sexual harm but has concerns going back for years, since he was very young, about sexual harm… I'm going to visit saying right, can we do any particular work on that, and it's a matter of resources - he's barely able to do any [work addressing] offending behaviour at all, let alone really sensitive stuff like that, and particularly when he hasn't got a conviction … he's not the high priority".

Even where young people are convicted of sexual crimes, sex offender treatment programmes vary significantly for incarcerated juveniles and treatment is patchy dependent on local attitudes and resources (Bumby & Talbot, 2007). In the YOT studied, specialist knowledge was held by one key professional who was case-holder for the more serious sexual harm cases and acted as a consultant for other sexual harm cases. She also had a remit to deliver training within the YOT and to other local practitioners. This seemed generally effective although the consequences should she leave were noted by senior staff. One new way forward being tried was her co-working some cases with other staff members which seemed a useful way of disseminating her expertise. Co-working has a short-term impact on caseload capacity which needs to be accepted to allow future benefits in shared expertise.

Resources - Funding

While caseloads and access to expertise have clear financial implications, they can be seen primarily as issues of human resources. Other resource issues were more immediately related to funding difficulties. Separate funding streams and annual deadlines were found to affect various agencies differently. One example during the placement was the news in one meeting that the local Primary Care Trust had a funding surplus which needed to be allocated by the end of the financial year or lost. When funding for a health related project was queried in another meeting I was able to suggest that funding might be available from the Primary Care Trust if they moved quickly. Sometimes the availability of funding for multi-agency projects comes with very strict timescales, as experienced by some staff who were involved with a pilot scheme for the Youth Justice Board. One YOT worker explained (63):

> "We were one of the small group of YOTs in a pilot scheme, delivering this programme, and the YJB had said, yes, we'd like to do it. We'll give you the funding for doing it, but we want it doing tomorrow. So whereas they saw the importance of this ... the time constraints that were put on us were probably the biggest challenge that we had".

Challenges regarding timescales were seen as another barrier to multi-agency working, although effective multi-agency working should save time. The added complications of involving more people and the need for more clarity and communication are in tension with the benefits of gaining more insights and access to expertise.

Possible disadvantages of multi-agency working

While the necessity of multi-agency working and the need for improved effectiveness within the multi-agency environment were frequently stated, on occasion valid arguments were made against multi-agency intervention. These included the way an involved key professional can provide a better service than several workers doing more piecemeal work from less relevant knowledge; the overwhelming experience for the young person or family of having so many professionals involved and the potential for more people to make mistakes. One YOT worker shared how some meetings include

multiple professionals from the same organisation, and questioned whether this was necessary (68):

> "Does everybody need to be there? Should there not be … one person from school, that would … represent the school? …If I was the parent, … I'd hate it to think that there was all these people, and maybe like they were ganging up on me… [One] particular mum did feel that, because she'd got about six children … in different parts of different systems, … I wouldn't have thought she would know if she was coming or going… Maybe if agencies can communicate within each other, there's not a need to overpower parents".

This recalls the power of the overlapping and intrusive agencies cited from Allen (2003) and other arguments against multi-agency working considered by Smith & Anderson (2008). Dale et al. (1986) presented how inter-agency conflicts can be dangerous, with potential to 'seriously interfere with the successful identification, treatment, and management of child-abusing families' (p.38) and went on to suggest how sometimes the inter-agency system may need more therapy than the family.

One useful MAPPA meeting was undermined when the minutes of the meeting were accessed by the young person's girlfriend in her residential unit. As more people and agencies are involved in confidential discussions, the risk of material being accessed inappropriately is also increased. Good multi-agency communication should reduce the need for repeated accounts of the same story by parents or young people. However, one YOT worker reported the opposite; that parents and young people find themselves repeating the story to the additional professionals involved. The possibilities of gaps between agencies caused by a lack of clarity have also been mentioned above. However, in general, multi-agency working is integral to a Youth Offending Team and will be needed in virtually all other teams working with young people who have sexually harmed.

Researcher effects and limitations – local team bias and access to other agencies

Access to a wide range of local agencies through meetings attended was a strength of the research, see Appendix 19. Additionally the YOT placement allowed observation of a range of internal agency co-operation which would not have been possible in a voluntary or specialist team placement. Some acknowledgement must be made of a bias towards the local team in seeing their side of the story in some multi-agency situations. The five external professionals interviewed offered alternative perspectives but were generally more critical of other local services than they were of the YOT team.

At times I was aware of being brought in on local agendas such as the need to develop a more strategic response to young people who had been sexually exploited. Certain staff members did express some concern that I was being pushed to attend a large number of these meetings but it was a relevant multi-agency concern, and one which did achieve positive progress over the observation period. Additional interviews with external staff were attempted but were declined or not possible within the time available.

Chapter 8 - Findings : Using a range of creative methods

Introduction

The importance of creativity and of using appropriate methods for working with young people who have sexually harmed is a significant part of a holistic approach, but an increasing expectation that techniques are 'evidence based' presents a number of challenges within this area. Using a range of creative methods forms the fourth and final main theme within this research and this topic will be explored in this chapter. The theme involves both creative intervention techniques and the resourceful use of a variety of methods to suit the individuals involved. As before, early stage quotations from interviews will be used to introduce the theme, leading on to further findings from the analysis. A range of methods will be presented within a related discussion of learning styles from the YOT placement and literature.

After this, sub-themes will be discussed in connection with how different methods might suit young people, staff, management and the public. These later sections will include findings relating to evidence based practice. Throughout the chapter links will be made to the literature presented in chapter two and a concluding section will consider the research bias and limitations in relation to this theme.

The emerging theme

While the theme of using a range of methods occurred somewhat less frequently than the previous three main themes, it was still raised by a number of participants before being mentioned by the researcher. One YOT worker explained (68):

> "I would suggest to work holistically was to look at it from all different angles, as a worker I believe you need to ... continually strive to look for better ways of working ... We continually have to adjust our practice to work with young people: for instance, where a young person has not had much education, therefore they struggle with literacy and numeracy, the work we should do with them shouldn't be paper based. I feel, we should do stuff, maybe drawing work, we should be

> doing more hands on work with them, doing things with media, taking them away from the office environment".

Here the emphasis is on suiting the young person, and moves on to appropriate learning activities depending on the young person's abilities and preferences. Use of visual and media activities will be explored further under the notion of 'learning styles'.

Other workers also discussed the need to engage the young people and pitch the work at a level that was suitable for the individual young person, but stopped short of saying the work should be led by the young person. One therapist presented this clearly (62):

> "I think for a start it means working in a way that is entirely geared for that young person ... I won't say it needs to be young person led, because that, whilst that's important, to expect them to know what it is they might need to deal with is actually an ask too much; but respecting that they have a view about what it is they want or need or struggle to address is actually very important to me, and it's right to make that explicit in the work".

In contrast to more general therapeutic activity, work with a young person who has sexually harmed will have an explicit agenda to address the harmful behaviour as well as more client-led work which might arise from seeing the whole young person. This chapter will necessarily contain links back to earlier themes of seeing the whole young person as well as working with wider family and peers and multi-agency working. Another YOT worker combined the themes of using a range of resources with working with the family and community in her definition of holistic working (73):

> "we try to work as holistically as possible; so to use as wide range of kind of resources to draw upon as we can to engage the young person, depending on what they respond to best really; so yeah, try and work as flexibly as possible, and do a lot of home and community work".

Some of the challenges relating to home and community work have previously been presented, but the need for flexibility and engaging the young person will be explored at greater length in this chapter. The challenges relating to these methods will generally be found within the need to somehow balance the preferences of young people, intervention staff, management, policy makers and the public.

Key issues in using a range of creative methods

The analysis of interview transcript portions relating to working using a range of creative methods yielded a number of key concepts, the most popular of which are listed below:

Figure 14. Key concepts regarding using creative methods

Tailor to individual (10)	Building a relationship (5)	Professional Certificate of Effective Practice (4)
Ways of working (9)	Facilities/ space (5)	Client led/ centred (4)
Resources (8)	Flexibility (5)	Meaningful (4)
Time limits (8)	What is comfortable (5)	Tensions/ expectations (4)
Going out somewhere (7)	**Practical activities** (5)	Staff strengths (4)
Engagement (7)	**Not just worksheets** (5)	**Anger management work**(4)
Drawing (7)	**Skills building work** (5)	Making it up (4)
Self-esteem (6)	Caseloads (5)	**Sexual health activity** (4)
Cognitive behaviouralism (6)	Trust (5)	Demanding on workers (4)
Girls group (6)	Collecting resources (4)	
	Learning styles (4)	

The codes in bold type suggest particular methods, activities or techniques while the other codes will be considered when addressing more of the thematic issues and challenges relating to using creative methods. The task of grouping these and other methods and activities thematically was informed by consideration of the notion of learning styles, which was raised by several interviewees in relation to working holistically.

Learning styles

Training regarding learning styles had recently been undertaken at the YOT and had been influential in shaping thinking regarding holistic working practice. One YOT worker summarised (70):

> "the focus is about using a whole range of methods in terms of engaging the young people: we… develop approaches to work with their learning styles… A lot of people are quite kinaesthetic learners. Some people … could be quite activist in terms of hands on. Some people can be quite theorists but the majority of

> cases our young people do tend to be more activists, and so it's about developing your interventions that suit to engage with a young person".

The terms theorist and activist (along with reflector and pragmatist) are used by Honey & Mumford (1992) as the four learning styles designated by their Learning Styles Questionnaire. The idea of being a kinaesthetic learner is one of Fleming's sensory modalities (Fleming, 2010) along with Visual learning, Auditory learning and Reading/writing learning (VARK). Longo (2004) also referred to the importance of learning styles in his model of an integrated/ holistic approach to work with young people who have sexually harmed. The idea that young people (or adults) have preferred learning styles is contested within educational and other literature (see for example Cuthbert, 2005; Coffield et al., 2004). Annison (2006) critically reviewed the use of learning styles in probation practice, pointing out that they have been used as a key part of the responsivity principle (Andrews et al., 1990) without a strong evidence base. Annison recognises some positives in terms of the likelihood of a range of learning styles and the benefits of any learner growing in awareness of how they best learn, but strongly advises more research into this area and reconsideration of any blanket categorisation of offenders as 'activist learners'. Recent literature seems to dismiss the idea that people have any one learning style, but the idea that people may benefit from using different styles and ways of learning has both popular and critical support (Fadel et al., 2008; Ginns, 2005). The diagram below presents the methods discussed by interviewees under the VARK categories of visual, auditory, reading/writing and kinaesthetic learning. This is far from an exhaustive list but indicates the range of methods considered helpful.

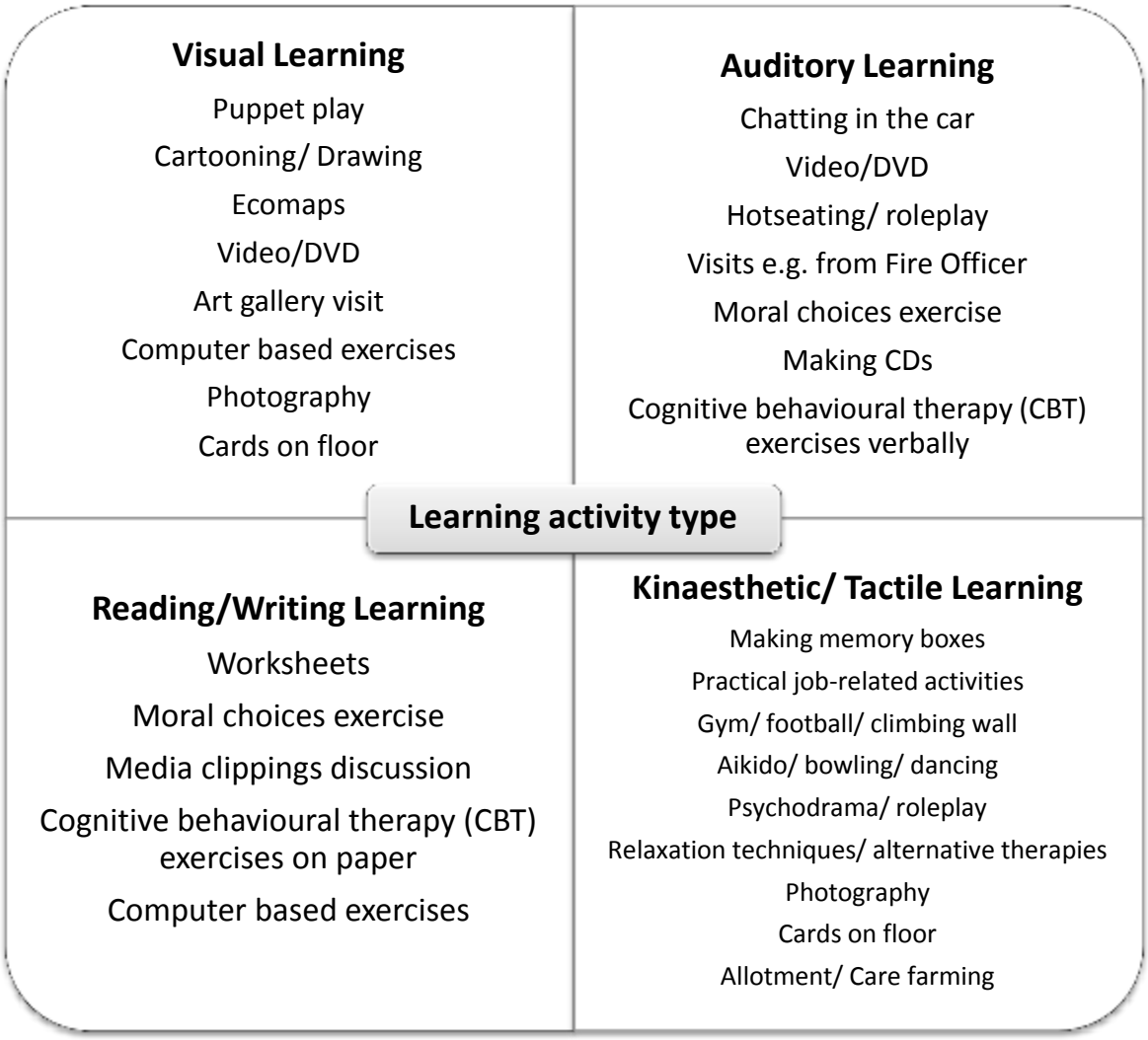

Figure 15. Intervention Methods mentioned grouped by Learning Activity Type

Identifying and seeking to fit with a young person's preferences in learning activity type should improve their engagement with the work, even though the evidence has not shown measurable increases in learning success when learning styles are matched (Coffield et al., 2004). It should be noted that 'learning success' is not the only concern, and that the use of a variety of methods can also add interest and improve memorability. Some of the strengths of different methods will be summarised below.

Visual Methods

The use of mixed-modality presentations combining visual and auditory methods were found by Moreno & Mayer (1999) to be most effective in improving students' learning. This supports the adage that 'a picture is worth a thousand words' or other less reliably substantiated claims that we remember more of what we see and hear (Treichler, 1967; Dale, 1969 criticised in Thalheimer, 2006). Art and drawing activities were mentioned by interviewees as being appealing and accessible to young people and may make the learning more memorable. An example of art therapy being beneficial for young offenders is provided by Bennink et al. (2003) who found that the art work clarified assessment issues and boosted one young person's self-esteem. Use of video or DVDs provide ways of presenting sensitive material in a way that can be less awkward for young people and staff members. O'Donnell et al. (1998) found that the use of video learning reduced the level of future sexually transmitted diseases among visitors to a clinic. The use of DVDs is also part of the SWAAY group-work programme for adolescents who have sexually harmed (Edwards et al., 2007).

Auditory methods

Once again, there are overlaps between these categories and the use of videos and DVDs is also an example of learning by hearing. Chatting without eye contact was also found to be helpful by a number of interviewees who stressed the value of talking while walking along or driving in the car (51):

> "I think that just by taking them out, even if it's to like the museum ...or up to the [local historical site]. Just taking them in your car, where they're not having to look at you, and they'll come out with all sorts of things then, because it's less intense. ... You find out so much more about what's going on for them, what their issues are, what they're worried about".

Hearing from a variety of workers was also found to increase levels of interest, such as inviting the local fire officer to talk to young people involved in arson. There is some evidence that learning retrieval is better following auditory rather than visual presentation of words (e.g. Brand & Jolles, 1985).

Reading/Writing Methods

The use of worksheets was very common within the YOT and with external workers, and files of worksheets arranged by topic were kept by some staff. Whether worksheets counted as a creative method was a matter of opinion; most staff described the need for creative activities in contrast to an over-reliance on worksheets while one social worker presented worksheets as a creative option when compared to simply talking. Other creative written methods included the use of some computer programmes by the external therapists and the use of media cuttings mentioned by one of the YOT workers (68):

> "looking at media... newspaper clippings: I've got a whole pile of similar offences that a young person's done; if a young person doesn't naturally accept responsibility for what they've done, I would often find ... a media clipping of a similar offence, and we would go through what that young person did, ... and how the victim's been affected, ... that gets them thinking about that scenario... So you're bringing them round to thinking about how their victim feels".

The use of written work to understand feelings of victims of abuse is also seen in the presentation of poems from survivors of abuse used in the G-MAP manual (AIM, 2010).

Kinaesthetic methods

More 'hands-on' activities were seen by interviewees to be particularly accessible for a number of young people. The making of memory boxes (Edwards et al., 2007) was described by one social worker as a way of seeing more of the whole young person (53):

> "I've used things like using memory boxes, and get them to decorate how they feel on the outside, how they feel on the inside, so there's lots of different sorts of ways, ... it's about seeing the young person as a whole ... looking at them and finding out how they feel".

Other activities including roleplay, gardening and job related activities were found to offer practical insights to young people about ways of interacting with others. Media projects (Goodman, 2010) and applied theatre (Dalrymple, 2006) have also been found to be useful methods of engaging young people in learning about safe sexual behaviour.

Methods to suit different people

Space permits only a brief exploration into these specific methods, but the idea of using a range of different techniques rather than a set programme or limiting the work to talking or worksheets was raised by many participants. Analysis of the reasons why a range of creative methods should be used indicated four main groups of people who might influence the methods chosen, with corresponding reasons and implications. These were:

- Methods to suit the young person - better engagement, meeting needs, improving outcomes;
- Methods to suit the workers - use skills, build toolkit, well supervised, enforcement/counselling;
- Methods to suit management/policy - what has evidence, is effective, meets targets, standards;
- Methods to suit the public - suitably tough and relevant, not 'having fun', media perceptions, cost effective.

As in other chapters, these sub-divisions are simplistic and need to be considered as representative rather than presenting strict boundaries. Many staff, managers and members of the public will be very concerned with what methods engage the young people and meet their needs, while staff, young people and the public will also be interested in what is effective. However, the notional influences of these different groups will be considered separately below, with consideration of the challenges and implications of using a range of creative methods.

Suiting the young person – engagement, meeting needs and improving outcomes

Methods that suit the individual young person have already been discussed in terms of learning styles above, and 'tailoring to the individual' was the most popular concept from the analysis. Other concepts of engagement, what is comfortable and being client-

centred or client-led also fit within this theme. Some methods, typically drawing, games or videos/DVDs may be considered 'young person friendly' and may be used by staff on a regular basis or particularly when other talking or worksheets methods seem stale. One worker explained (54):

> "I might bring a video down with me, or I'm gonna bring some coloured pens down, we'll do something interactive on the whiteboard, and get them drawing something, and it's just a different way of expressing … the other thing that I sometimes do is, if people have got too used to coming in here and seem to be switched off, … I will just go straight out the building with them, and sometimes just go for a walk, and just talk about some of the things".

Here the change of method or environment is seen to increase engagement which is necessary to allow any method to be effective or to meet the young person's needs. Building a relationship with the young person is seen as key to understanding and effective work. Hewish describes how:

> 'In drama therapy we learn to change the channel, move from drama, to art, to words until we find a channel of connection' (Bergman et al., 2006: p.605).

The need to recognise the individual preferences of young people was also stressed by several staff, since even 'young person friendly' methods may not suit all young people. Another worker was emphatic (67):

> "there'd be other kids who'd absolutely freeze and die on the spot at the very idea of picking up a crayon, you know, so, it's about 'horses for courses' isn't it?"

While certain methods may typically be considered more enjoyable or useful for engaging young people, and other methods may suit the particular learning style or preference of the individual, it is also important to consider the young person's abilities and access needs. Reading based methods may simply be inaccessible for some young people with learning difficulties or other disabilities and the need to be flexible and creative in addressing topics is vital, as one worker explained (66):

> "I hadn't had any real experience of working with young people with learning difficulties, and then this was my first young person who had sexually harmful behaviour, and that's when I really fell in love with the work I suppose … We did some game playing, we did things with cards… artwork, role play, … We watched a DVD … which was specifically targeted at young people with learning difficulties and sexual development".

The use of specialist resources such as the DVD described here is a good way of bringing specialist expertise and material to a wider audience, in a format that is typically accessible and low pressure for a young person. Workers as well as young people may find it easier to use DVDs to introduce discussion of sexual topics but an over-reliance on prepared materials will reduce the individualised nature of the work and move away from building a useful relationship with the young person. This interviewee also introduces the idea that creative work can be more satisfying for the worker, and this will be discussed further in the next theme.

Within this section are a final group of methods which might be seen to suit the young person but which may not be considered desirable or effective by staff, management or the public in general. One police officer commented that it made him chuckle when young people with burglary charges were taken to the climbing wall which he said was a regular activity in the YOT. Young people who have sexually harmed may be considered more a risk to other children and may be prevented from participating in group activities or those involving physical contact. This may be due to concerns for other children or mainly out of the need to avoid a public outcry. However, the need for healthy, positive touch was emphasised by more than one interviewee and with appropriate supervision and boundaries, relaxation exercises including massage were considered by some to be helpful with this client group.

Suiting the workers - using skills, building toolkit, supervision and balancing enforcement/counselling

The preferences and strengths of specific workers were also seen as key in selecting a range of creative methods, as is seen in the concepts of staff strengths as well as resources, caseloads and the demands on workers. The willingness of many staff to try different methods to find something that works was evident, but the tension between creativity and blindly 'making things up' was also identified. One therapist summarised (59):

> "We will pull in any number of various things, and try them, hopefully not in an untutored or unskilled way... One of my colleagues is very keen on relaxation techniques and those sort of things".

Here the influence of staff preferences is clear, as well as a flexibility to suit the young person as well as the worker. Another interviewee presented the use of drawing as something which suited his own skill set but was also enjoyed by many young people (70):

> "I suppose in a sense it's recognising my skills ... I'm very good at hands on... I tend to do a lot of visual stuff, ...I draw things, so it's not all written stuff, cause I do a lot of draw.. , young people like drawing, and encourage people to draw... I do like cards, so I put cards down, so you get young people to slot cards in place like that ... When a young person feels comfortable with it, I will do roleplay, so I've got a whole bag of methods which I tend to use".

Using the preferences and skills of staff may be sensible in terms of manageable workloads and staff retention but a method will also need to engage the young person or be seen as somehow effective to justify using it. It seems likely that the worker who is 'very keen' on using relaxation exercises with young people who have sexually harmed believes this is a useful, effective way of helping young people rather than simply something they enjoy as a worker. This need for effectiveness and accountability also moderates excessive creativity or 'making things up', as explained by one worker (67):

> "I'm somebody who would be prepared to work outside the box, not be a loose cannon obviously, but sometimes it's necessary to try things, as long as there are structures in place to safeguard that, you know, that you're not just willy-nilly going around doing whatever the hell you think".

Creativity can be supported by guiding theoretical frameworks (Chaffin et al., 2008) and appropriate supervisory arrangements.

The need for good supervision within this work was seen in interviews and in discussions and meetings attended where cases and risks were considered. Workers also experience the tensions of expectations from management and the public in terms of the use of evidence-based methods as well as using methods which look suitably tough and punitive. The changing priorities from management and policy guidance were seen by this worker to add such pressure that creativity suffers (67):

> "I think for case managers it's much more difficult, because... they're told that this has got to be the priority, then next week it's like, you've got to do this as well ... When you overload [staff] like that, they revert to, 'keep it tight, do what you have to do, get kids through the court order. Hopefully nothing horrendous will happen'. It quashes people's creativity; it quashes their sense of confidence and trying things ... You just go back to the lowest common denominator which is 'cover my back, cross your fingers' ".

Here the basic, easiest work for staff is described as getting the young people through their order, which necessarily involves sufficient engagement to avoid breach proceedings, but the implication is that meeting all the targets for national standards and other initiatives prevents creative work which could actually help the young person in changing their behaviour. The balance between enforcement work (fulfilling contact hours, avoiding breach) and counselling type work (addressing deeper issues and needs) was raised by many staff, particularly in relation to the necessary environment for therapy within criminal justice. Some staff seemed to feel that the lack of a homely environment typically represented by sofas, or space to 'put someone back together' after a more therapeutic session meant the YOT building was not suitable for this task. In some areas other therapeutic services will be used to address more of the sexual harm issues, particularly when a young person has been a victim of abuse, but in this YOT this work was attempted alongside enforcement work but with recognition of the environmental challenges and additional demands this placed on staff.

Suiting management/policy - what has evidence, is effective, meets targets, standards

As has been stated, it would be wrong to portray managers as the only people who are concerned about evidence for practice, but this priority will be explored under this heading. Issues relating to evidence-based practice were raised by a number of interviewees before the topic was raised by the researcher as a question for discussion. Additionally concepts relating to available resources, time limits, caseloads and facilities can also be considered management concerns. Management involvement with cases pointed to many of the same concerns as workers in terms of engaging the young people and supporting using creative methods that were helpful. However, observations in

meetings revealed the persistent concerns of risk management, meeting National Standards and developing new initiatives with targets to justify funding and policy priorities relating to youth crime reduction and prevention.

One meeting attended was discussing arrangements for a new project to provide intensive interventions for young people causing particular concern. The Youth Crime Action Plan (Home Office, 2008) allowed access to funding for projects focusing on seven main targets within priority areas, with half of the money allocated to Family Intervention Projects and 'Think Family'. The Department for Children, Schools and Families Taskforce representative at the meeting stressed how the proposed project needed to report against five areas, and talked about "pinning down targets for some of these measurables". The YOT managers then discussed how the success of the project would be difficult to measure in terms of Asset score reductions since Asset measures risk, not need. Keeping the funding agency happy was an additional pressure for the team managers. The challenges of involving local Children's Services and other professionals in a multi-agency approach were also prominent in this discussion. The Ministerial Foreword to the *Youth Crime Action Plan Handbook* (Home Office, 2009b) states:

> 'The interventions are evidence-based and effective' (p.3).

However, further explanations for the evidence base and effectiveness of the interventions are not included in the Handbook.

A lack of clarity regarding evidence-based practice was a significant finding throughout the research, with practitioners holding a wide range of views about what evidence-based practice was as well as how essential or restrictive it is within holistic work. The initial survey of practitioners revealed both strong agreement and strong disagreement with the statement 'Working holistically with a young person who has sexually harmed means using only evidence-based methods', with a greater proportion of managers agreeing with the statement than disagreeing although the overall group tendency was toward disagreement (see Figure 3 p.117). Interviews both complicated the issue and shed light upon it, since it became clear that some practitioners understood evidence-

based practice to mean examining the evidence of a young person's offending or keeping good records as evidence of your practice.

Several practitioners demonstrated more knowledge of research regarding evidence-based practice, but also had some reservations about it. One senior staff member at the YOT stated (51):

> "I think it's crucial to keep up to date with research, and I think that we should base our practice on the latest research. I also think it's quite important to have quite a sceptical eye and to remember that things do go in fashions and that kids don't fit into boxes … I think we have to use Evidence Based Practice as the basis of what we do, but we also have to remember … that young people are individuals".

This view balances the need to keep aware of research while emphasising the other holistic concerns of seeing the whole young person. Other staff discussed the way that using evidence helped to access funding and permission for activities and several staff mentioned the Professional Certificate for Effective Practice and the McGuire Principles (McGuire & Priestley, 1995) The more general term of 'effective practice' has appeal since all workers would want their practice to be seen as effective. It could be argued that much of the argument behind using creative methods is for practice to be accessible and engage the young people, thereby being effective. While YJB National Standards focus on assessment by reductions in offending and completing orders, the Key Elements in Effective Practice series does include a focus on engagement of young people (YJB, 2008a; Mason & Prior, 2008), although the summary and source document both acknowledge the lack of research into this area.

Further discussion of evidence and effective practice brings in not just the influence of managers and policies but also the way these are led by a need for public accountability. An experienced YOT worker considered the historical and political influences of research as well as the increasing pressures of public opinion (71):

> "I think [evidence-based practice has] got its place, basically, and it's something that I am very interested in, … looking at the research and evidence. … The *Misspent Youth* [Audit Commission, 1996] report … basically said that we were ineffective … We have to have research into what is effective, but we've also got to be aware that a lot of research is misused, is manipulated by the YJB … There's

> a whole range of research out there that says we don't have to have such a controlling system, that a lenient system is just as effective, … but I think that we now live and work in a society that is much less forgiving … we're expected to be much more accountable to the public".

The lack of a broad evidence base for work with young people who have sexually harmed leads to the necessary reliance on practice experience and more general research into work with these and other young people with complex needs. Additionally some suspicion of evidence agendas and manipulation (as found by Wilcox, 2003) reduces adherence to requirements that work is evidence-based. The next section will explore how accountability to the public and media perceptions also influence the choice of methods used with young people who have sexually harmed.

Suiting the public - suitably tough and relevant, not 'having fun', media perceptions, cost effective

The influence and tensions from public pressure and expectations were also raised by several interviewees while discussing the use of creative methods. One worker commented (54):

> "I just took that lad up to the art gallery … There won't be research for that, and people will go… someone from the general public, Daily Mail reader or you know, well what do you do that for? … You're just treating them, but what they don't see is the appalling circumstances and poverty that these people live in, and actually what you are trying to do is give them different reference points, for them to operate from, and use as a platform to build".

In addition to the expectations that work is evidence or research based, this worker is aware how the general public might disapprove of his visiting an art gallery with a young person. Although a brief visit to a free educational activity might not cause the scandal of a Hawaiian party (Mail Online, 2009), the awareness of potential media headlines can be seen to affect the creative methods proposed for work with young people who have sexually harmed. Additional implications might be from family members of the young person who see negative behaviour being rewarded by activities that are inaccessible to the family as a whole. The expectation that interventions are tough, not fun but cost-effective might be typical of public and media expectations. In contrast, the use of

creative methods such as drama performances by offenders can be effective in changing public perceptions of offenders (Hughes, 2005).

The lack of political will to invest in therapeutic programmes for young people who have sexually harmed was frustrating to one senior member of staff at the YOT. She pointed out the geographical variations in treatment (57):

> "We had a young sexual harmer who was transferred from another area and I couldn't believe the resources they'd got to actually refer him into a very intensive therapeutic thing. Again, we've got one young person through (external agency) in a therapeutic community: he's quite unusual. I would like to see that happening more frequently, with a wider range of kids, not just those articulate ones who happen to fit the bill, but I'd like to see a range of provision, and I think there isn't the political will or the money or the desire to commit the resources to that".

The lack of a national strategy for young people who have sexually harmed contributes to the patchy response to this area, with specialist services being available or purchased in some parts of the country but not in others (Long, 2010). The YOT studied had formerly accessed a specialist project in the area but this was no longer available, and the one young person in an expensive external therapeutic community was a noted unusual case. The 2010 election promises by the Conservative party to prioritise the needs of victims may appeal to the public but suggests that increased spending on young people who sexually harm is unlikely, as was indicated by the Department of Health representative at the *Delivering the National Strategy for Young People who Sexually Abuse* conference (Tutty, 2009).

Researcher effects and limitations – lack of intervention observation and own background

No direct work with young people was observed during the placement so the researcher relied on accounts of practice from the professionals observed and interviewed as well as the two young people interviewed. Some creative methods were memorable to the young people, including work using cartoon faces to discuss feelings. The decision to keep a distance from direct work was made to facilitate access to the placement and

avoid interference with therapeutic work but observation would have increased insight into this area of work.

My own background as a dramatherapist did increase my interest in creative methods, but the lack of space to explore any specific methods has prevented any biased focus on dramatic methods. My own reservations about the outright supremacy of evidence-based practice will have influenced my presentation of this issue. However, the findings relating to the mixed understanding of 'evidence-based practice' seem less subject to bias and rather offer new factual insights into this debate. The topic of evidence based practice could fill many theses and cannot receive thorough treatment as part of a sub-theme here. However, the implications for holistic practice with young people who have sexually harmed have been raised and will be drawn on further in the following chapter.

Chapter 9 - Findings : Fusion of themes; benefits, challenges and implications

Introduction

Working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed involves taking a wide view of the young person and their context, and using broad and creative approaches involving family members and relevant professionals; generating a range of benefits, challenges and implications. This chapter will draw together the findings of the study and lead on to recommendations for practice and policy. The inter-connection of the four main themes will be stressed, moving towards a whole view of holistic working. Ideas from the young people interviewed will be drawn together to amplify their voices, as well as adding to this wider view and complementing other findings. Additional findings from the research which fit less easily into the main four themes will be presented. This will include the brief presentation of a model of working holistically to reduce or prevent sexual harm, which incorporates more preventative and victim work. The benefits and rationale for holistic practice will be examined. More general challenges and barriers to holistic working will be identified, along with situations where holistic practice may not be possible or preferable. Ways of tackling these challenges will lead into recommendations for practice, policy and further research.

Connectedness of themes

It has been seen that the four main themes from the research necessarily overlap to form a wide view of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. The most general theme, that of seeing the whole young person requires involvement of family and local agencies both in terms of assessing the young person and working to help the young person, while creative methods are also needed to facilitate this work, as summarised by one YOT worker (70):

> "we look at all the context in terms of all the family, the community aspects… The beauty of working as a multi-agency [team], there are a whole range of professionals, i.e. education and health, and I actually find *that* a holistic approach. So, we're not seeking to work with the young person on one specific

> area, we're working on a multitude of areas... recognising those closely associated risk factors in the young person's life, and seeking to increase the protective factors".

Working with the young person's family also requires involvement from other agencies and creative approaches, both in helping the family and involving them in supporting the young person. Multi-agency working should also incorporate creative methods, and requires a good understanding of the young person's whole needs and family circumstances. The importance of good connections and communications between these different groups are included on the main themes diagram by connecting arrows.

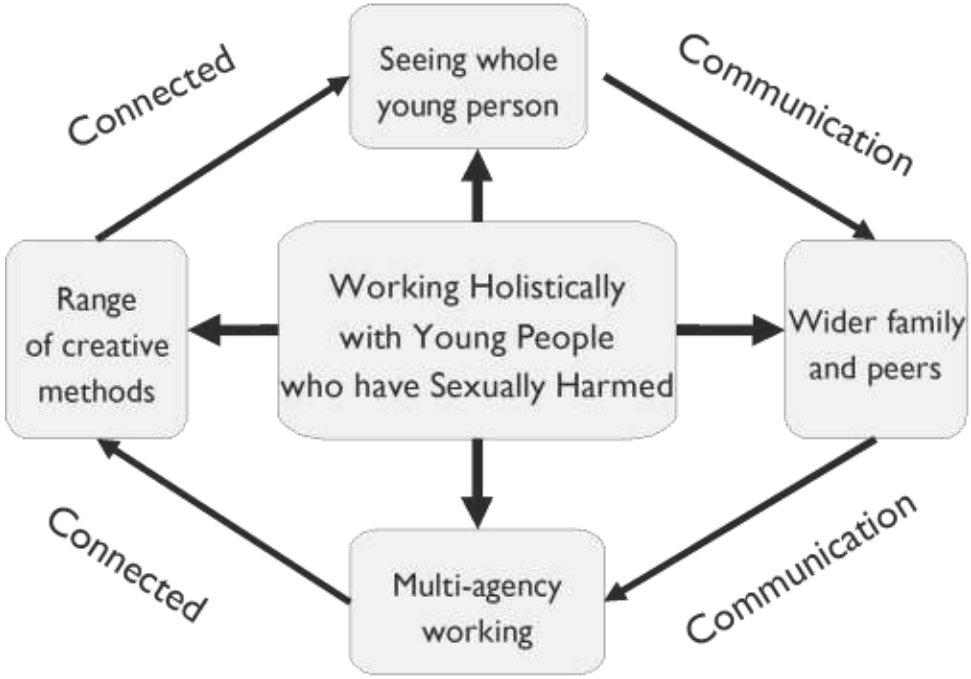

Figure 16. Main themes of Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed (repeated)

Throughout the research the primacy of the themes on the diagram has been confirmed and supported by interviewees, and although drafted at an earlier stage in the research it remains a useful summary of the main findings of the study. Each of the four themes has sub-themes, with related challenges and implications which have been explored in the preceding chapters. One of the aims of this chapter is to bring these themes together to gain what could be considered a holistic view of working holistically, working with the whole topic as more than a sum of separate themes, challenges and parts.

Findings from young people

Views from the young people have been included throughout this research and their interviews were analysed together with the rest of the data. However, the opportunity is being taken here to allow their voices to be heard more clearly. It was noted in chapter two that contributions from young people who have sexually harmed are very rarely included in the literature. Hackett & Masson (2006) shared findings from anonymous service user questionnaires from nine service providers within their broader Mapping and Exploring project while Montgomery-Devlin (2004) reported findings from a feedback questionnaire within her evaluation of the Young People's Therapeutic Project in Northern Ireland. The Hackett & Masson study contributed useful insights regarding the need for clear processes and respectful, supportive interventions, as well as useful ethical considerations in terms of consulting young service users. The Montgomery-Devlin report included a much briefer summary of positive user views and it is unclear how far these might have been affected by returning surveys to the local practitioners rather than a more independent external researcher.

The low numbers of young people and parent participants in this study allows very little generalisation from their responses. However, it seems vital to share the contributions made by the young people (Del Busso, 2004) which add another point of view to what it means to work holistically. Rather than considering the Four Themes diagram, the young people were supported to create their own diagrams representing what it would mean for professionals to 'see the whole picture' in helping someone who had sexually harmed. The diagrams created are reproduced below:

Figure 17. Seeing whole picture diagram from Young Person (61)

The diagram was generated from verbatim responses from the young person, starting at the 12 o'clock position and adding items clockwise. The mentions of fruit and medical help were perhaps prompted by an encouragement to include anything more general about 'living or being healthy' but otherwise these were ideas from the young person.

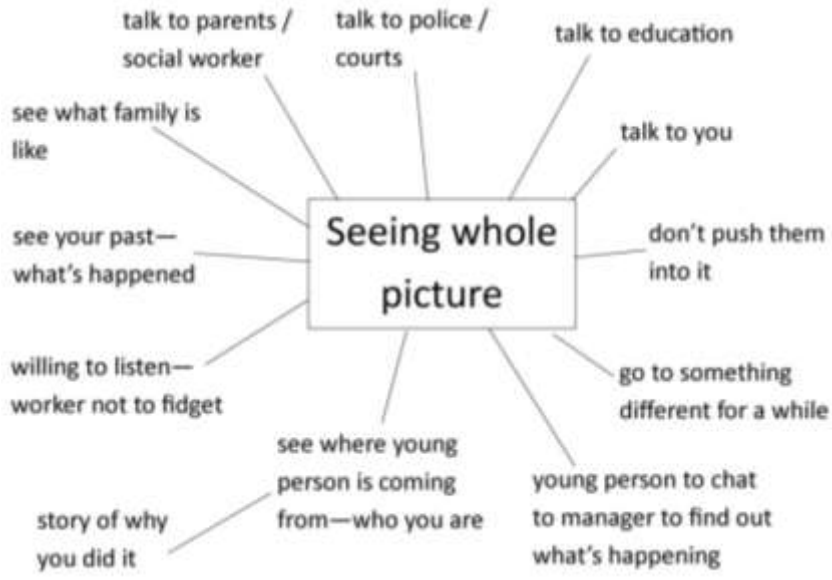

Figure 18. Seeing whole picture diagram from Young Person (72)

This diagram was generated in a similar way with the first response being to 'talk to you' (talk to the young person) in the 2 o'clock position and moving clockwise. In this case, a

prompting question of whether the worker should talk to anyone else led to the positive inclusion of talking to parents, social worker, police, courts and education. This was in direct contrast to the view of the other young person who was not at all keen for family or others to be involved.

Both young people prioritised talking to them; this was the first way staff should access the whole picture. An immediate balance to this was the need to accept the difficulty of talking sometimes, and the importance of backing off or not pushing too much. Other ideas included the importance of listening to and involving the young person, as in Hackett & Masson (2006). These priorities can be seen within the respect and autonomy section of the benefits of seeing the whole young person, see p.141. The fact that some young people are unwilling to involve their family or carers is an important challenge preventing good support from families, see Figure 9, p.161. The involvement of other agencies was included by one young person, while the other seemed more removed from community engagement, living in an external residential placement (which had been accessed by good joint working). Both young people were positive about the intervention work they had experienced; including some more creative drawing work and the ACE (Avoid Control Escape) risk management techniques from AIM (2010). While their priorities were clearly on being heard themselves, the young people contributed to the findings in each of the four main themes, as will be summarised below.

Summary of findings from four main themes

The contents of the previous four chapters are summarised in the table below, which particularly draws out the benefits, challenges and implications of each of the main themes in terms of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed. Identifying repetition and overlaps within this table allows a more general idea of benefits, challenges and implications of working holistically with this client group.

Table 12. Summary of Key Research Findings

Theme	Seeing the whole young person	Working with wider family and peers	Working in a multi-agency way	Using a range of creative methods
What? Sub-division of topic areas	Whole person – • health • learning • emotional & social development • identity • family & social relationships • behavioural development • self care skills.	• "Dangerous Families" • Families in Need • Influences both ways • Families can Support • Parents as Experts Also positive, neutral and negative impacts from peers	Range of agencies – • health • learning (includes welfare) • emotional & social development • identity (spiritual, mentors) • family & social relationships, • behavioural development, • self care skills.	• Visual methods • Auditory methods • Reading/writing methods • Kinaesthetic methods
Benefits	See "ok human being", respect Understand range of needs See roots of behaviour See strengths to build on	Understand influences Recognise family needs Family can help support Build on strengths	More work with shared values Shared knowledge & expertise Maximise use of resources, staffing, time and opportunities	Engage the young person & staff Increase effectiveness of work More accessibility
Challenges	Young person may be reluctant to share personal material Worker attitudes & prejudices and emotional burden System priorities & compliance Time, resources, funding, access	Families add risks and problems Families can be hard to engage Young person may resist family involvement Peers – access, resources, groups Workers need to release control	Different values & priorities Unclear roles & communication Need to share resources, access expertise and busy staff	Need to tailor methods to individuals Need for evidence base Expectations from policy/public Access to resources/ specialists
Implications	Require input other agencies Openness, needs good closure Need more preventative work Better understanding	Require input other agencies May need more targeted work Need more preventative work	Need for more training of staff Need clearer policies, national and local. Invest in relationships	Further effectiveness research Raising public awareness Need more shared good practice

Benefits of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed

Holistic working brings benefits throughout the assessment and intervention stages of work, and these should lead to benefits as overall outcomes of the work. At the assessment stage, a holistic approach should ensure that the young person is viewed respectfully as a human being with both strengths and needs. A holistic approach should examine the range of influences on the young person from within their family and the wider community including peers. During a holistic assessment some of the roots of the young person's behaviour are likely to be revealed as well as the range of needs experienced by the young person and their family. Strengths from the young person and their family should also be usefully identified.

Moving on to the intervention stage, a holistic approach would seek to address the needs of the young person and their family as effectively as possible. This will generally require involvement from other professionals since the needs may go beyond the sexual harm concerns. Support from the young person's family should contribute to assisting the young person effectively, and holistic interventions will usually seek to utilise the power of positive family reinforcement. A range of creative methods should increase engagement and effectiveness of the work.

In terms of outcomes, a holistic approach should benefit the young person and their family by ensuring their needs are addressed, their strengths and protective factors are boosted and they can move towards a positive future. A holistic approach should also benefit the public by using insights and thorough work to protect future victims while sharing resources to be cost-effective. The crucial nature of this work was stressed by one YOT worker (51):

> "I think the MAPPA system … has done a lot to improve multi-agency working and it's made other agencies very much more aware of their duty to provide resources for this group of people, children… [It's important] for public protection issues, because these young people, if they're worked with and made to feel safe at an early age, I believe, are much less likely to become dangerous adults… I think society has a duty and should be putting more money into this particular area to protect them and to protect the public in the future."

Here a holistic approach by agencies working together to address the range of needs is seen to prevent future harm to children. All these benefits are summarised in the diagram below which reads from top to bottom.

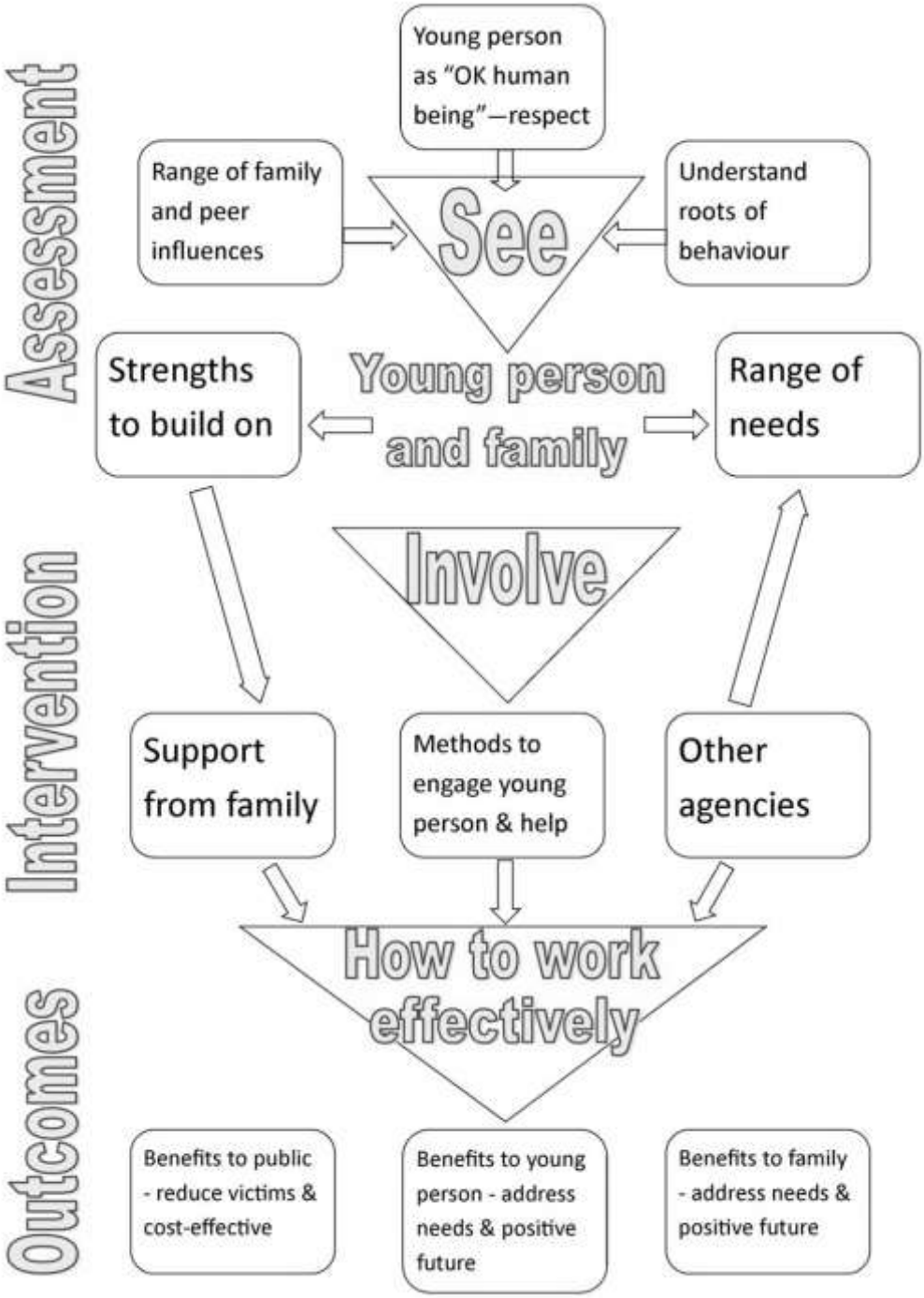

Figure 19. Benefits of Holistic Working with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

Through the different stages of engagement with young people who have sexually harmed, this diagram includes many of the benefits of a holistic approach as shown in the benefits row of the table above. All four main themes connect together to contribute to these benefits. The next section will consider the challenges row of the same table.

Challenges to working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed

Discussion of the four main themes and related observations led to the recognition of a number of challenges in each area of the work. These challenges can be shown as coming from four generalised groups of people: the young people, the families, the staff and the Government/ policy makers, and are summarised in Figure 20 below. It should be noted that not all young people, families or staff present all these challenges.

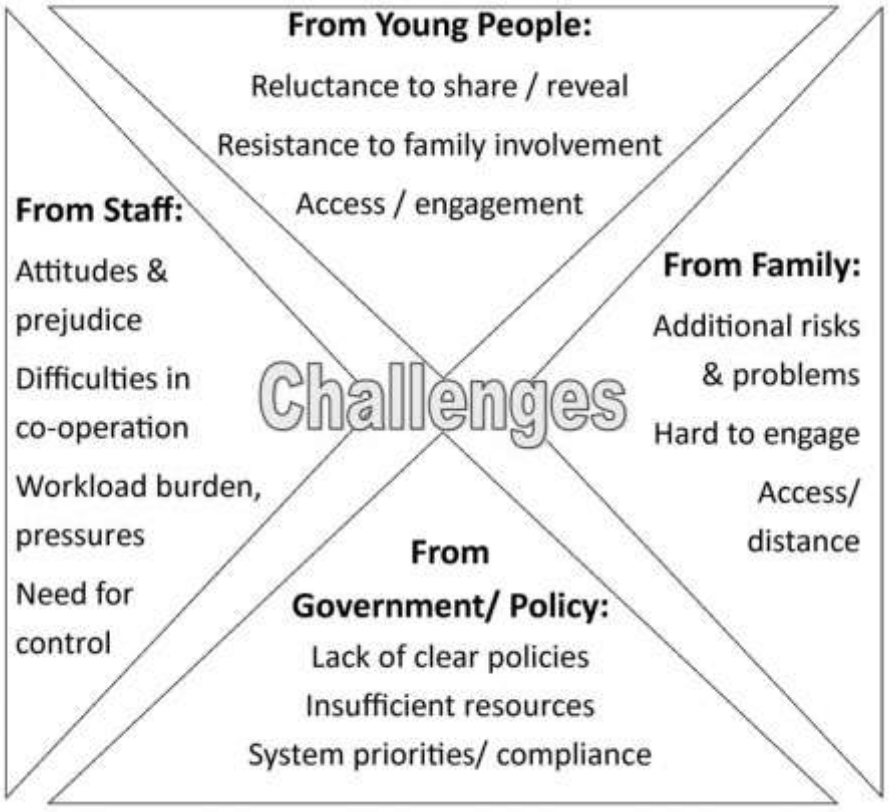

Figure 20. Challenges to Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

Challenges from young people who have sexually harmed regarding holistic working relate both to their openness and motivation to engage with the work. In order to see the whole young person, the young person needs to be willing to open up and share with the workers, and this requires the development of a trusting relationship. Suitable creative methods can facilitate this sharing and build the young person's engagement with the process. Reluctance from some young people to include their families in the work presents another challenge to holistic, family based work. Family members may present similar issues in terms of willingness to share openly and engage with the work. Some families will bring serious challenges in terms of safeguarding and in some cases, the removal of the young person from the family adds challenges of separation and distance.

Challenges from staff which affect holistic working include personal qualities regarding attitudes and values as well as logistical challenges such as workloads and communication and co-operation with others. Some basic misconceptions about young people who have sexually harmed could be addressed by wider training, but the influence of personal attitudes and values and the emotional burden of the work require good on-going supervision. Issues involved in releasing control to the young person's family need good inter-agency collaboration and risk assessment. Further training will also help increase confidence with more creative methods. Workload pressures and challenges between agencies may be partly down to staff but also reflect more systemic challenges posed by the Government and policy makers. Holistic working requires support in terms of clear policies and sufficient resources from a national and local level, and contrasting priorities reflected in National Standards targets simply ensuring compliance and reducing reoffending act in opposition to a holistic, needs-led approach to these young people.

Before discussing the implications of the research an additional section will address some supplementary issues and challenges drawn from outside the four main themes. These will then feed into a summary of implications which will lead into recommendations and the conclusion of the study.

Issues and challenges from outside four main themes

Following the analysis under the four main themes, the unconsidered sections of interview transcripts were examined for additional key concepts and themes. The most popular are listed below:

Figure 21. Additional key concepts

Need for training (7)	Flavour of the month (2)
Residential variations (4)	Building issues (2)
Caseloads (3)	Prefer straight talk (2)
Work sent to specialists (3)	Residential – wraparound (2)
Victim issues (3)	Residential can be holistic (2)
Custody – distances (2)	Not over-intervening (2)
Cover yourself as a practitioner (2)	Holistic can be targeted (2)
Pro-social modelling (2)	Playing as a team (2)
Prioritise using Asset (2)	Restorative justice (2)
Communicate including young person (2)	Low risk offenders (2)

The need for training has already been mentioned as a response to some of the challenges above, and will be considered amongst the implications and recommendations from the research. Questions regarding the use of residential and specialist placements and custody for these young people provoked a range of opinions regarding how holistic these can be. Some specialist placements were viewed as offering a holistic, wraparound service to young people but other settings were seen as failing to work holistically, often due to circumstances beyond staff control such as insufficient staffing and therapy levels, and distance from family members.

The main additional findings related to the realities of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. More challenges to the work included the political and economic framework, the question of who is getting an overview of the work and seeing patterns, concerns that expertise was concentrated in a few specialists and the needs of young people on the edge of the service, where sexual harm was more minor or secondary to another offence. The question of whether young people who have sexually harmed can be treated or considered as a group was also seen as a challenge, while the demanding nature of the work was seen to necessitate good support and supervision for staff involved.

Challenges about the realities of the work were brought home to the researcher at several key times throughout the observation placement and the analysis, including the way that models, theories and diagrams sometimes seem irrelevant. One process note included the reflections:

> "Quite overwhelmed by the awful realities of the young person's life and experiences, such that models and diagrams and theories all seem rather pointless. How on earth can anyone work holistically with this young person and his situation – the reality just seems unmanageable, too time consuming and emotionally demanding. Everything bad that could have happened for this young person seems to have happened, and interventions such as accommodating him in a children's home only made things worse... Feeling quite at a loss, but... these feelings and frustrations surely connect with the workers trying to apply models and forms to such a young person, and trying to consider how to work and what to prioritise, and whether specialist support can be accessed, and how the young person can be engaged through his mental health problems. Oh my word." (S Hall, analysis note, 27/1/10)

It is important to acknowledge that work with young people who have sexually harmed is complex, difficult and at times emotionally demanding, and it should be recognised that even the best attempts to work holistically are not always successful in engaging or helping an individual young person.

Other challenges seen to *prevent* holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed included the difficulties in custodial and residential placements, the way funding for projects fluctuates with the popularity of issues and the way workers may be tied up with statutory demands, recording and 'covering themselves'. Alongside these barriers to holistic working was an awareness of the need for appropriate, measured responses and the desire to avoid over-intervention. The need to balance holistic and targeted approaches came through as a strong theme, with different views around how far these can overlap or whether they present opposites. The view that holistic work is not always possible was also presented.

Targeted work as a contrast or complement to working holistically

Efforts within the research to examine positive and negative factors to working holistically led to some discussion of targeted work, and whether this was an opposite to holistic working. There was some agreement that a 'full-on, holistic everything approach' was not always appropriate, and mention was made of the McGuire (1995) principle of a measured response to risk classification. One key factor affecting a holistic approach was identified by one YOT worker as the initial reasons for contact (67):

> "I don't think [targeted and holistic] are mutually exclusive, I think you can have a very targeted approach, and still work holistically; what's different is the starting point... They're only here because they've been made to come here, so the starting point is not... holistic is it? That's like, 'you *will*'. ... It starts from that, 'you've been caught' or, 'we've decided what you're doing is not acceptable and as a consequence we're slapping these conditions on you, that you must stick to, otherwise you're in even more trouble' ".

Here the beginning of the work is identified as far from holistic: a focused response to specific behaviour leads the young person to the YOT with particular conditions and requirements. While pre-sentence reports and Asset forms require a more holistic overview of the young person, the time restrictions for completing these limit the holistic nature of an assessment.

The need for a thorough holistic approach or perhaps a more targeted approach will be shown through a holistic assessment process. Young people who have been involved in less serious incidents of sexual harm and who are seen to have few other needs may benefit from more minimal intervention from the YOT. However, some young people who have received referral orders or final warnings may have been engaged in very concerning behaviour or have a wide range of other critical needs both individually and within the family.

A wider holistic view

The need to consider a wider whole picture was also raised, as some interviewees and staff observed were keenly aware of the needs of victims and wider public protection.

These issues are less the topic of this research which focuses on working holistically with the young people who have sexually harmed. However, it is acknowledged that a holistic approach to tackling sexual harm would need to include thorough consideration of the needs of victims and preventative work to protect the public. The Cartesian axes described in chapter two (Figure 2, p.47) provide a useful framework for a wider picture of holistic working to prevent or reduce sexual harm by young people:

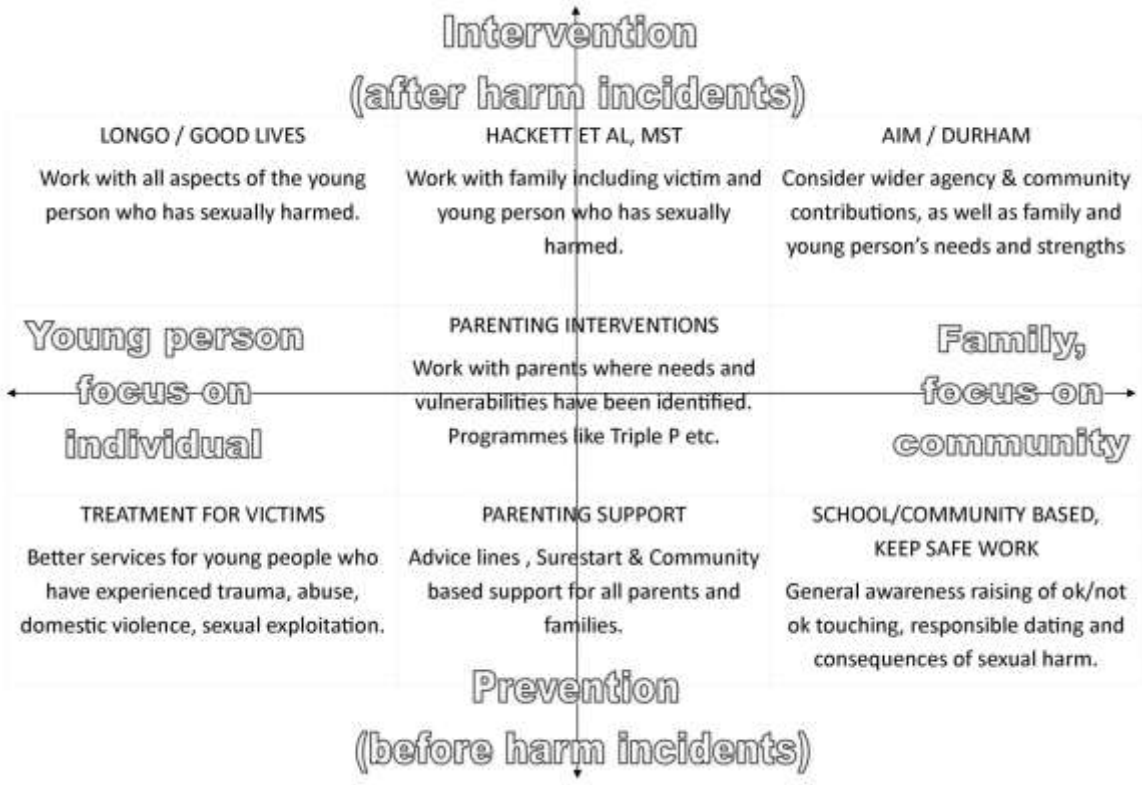

Figure 22. Axes presenting a holistic approach to sexual harm by young people

The upper portion incorporates the different theories from the Holistic Spectrum (Figure 1, p.42) which all present models for intervention or treatment for young people who have sexually harmed. The central mention is of parenting interventions which may follow some identified needs or vulnerabilities but would ideally be delivered before harm takes place. The lower portion of the axes includes a range of preventative strategies from an individual response to victims of abuse and trauma to a more national response of preventative work in schools.

One police officer explained how the needs of the whole community may be in conflict with the young person's needs (69):

> "I don't think the whole of the YOT could work holistically. It has to be part of it, but … sometimes … the path has to be very narrow, and they have to start doing things to show that they can do it, before you start to lose them again… [Working holistically is] working with young people to their needs really, primarily, but that's what I'm saying. Sometimes, you have to take away their needs, and look at the needs of the whole community, but holistically is working with the whole community as well."

When practitioners truly engage with young people in a holistic way, the needs of other family members, victims and other community members will often be apparent and require following up, sometimes by other services. Recognising and acting on child protection concerns will always be part of the remit of any staff member involved with young people who have sexually harmed. Some wider implications will be considered in the following section which will address the implications of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed.

Implications of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed

Implications from this research will be considered in terms of addressing the challenges identified above as well as consideration of the effects and suggested consequences of working holistically with these young people. Positive sharing during holistic work will involve vulnerability from the young person and family members and this will require sensitive handling and good closure in terms of therapeutic work and endings of treatment and support, as discussed in chapter five, 'Seeing the whole young person'. As more needs are identified, input from other agencies will be vital as has been seen by the many links to multi-agency work from other themes. Additionally, a number of changes have been suggested by the challenges above. These are shown in Figure 23 below, which incorporates the implications row from Table 12 above.

Figure 23. Implications of Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

More training and better inter-agency relationships

Where staff are encouraged to use creative methods with young people and their families there is a clear need for training in a range of techniques, as well as for training specific to the range of needs of young people who have sexually harmed. Training regarding increasing engagement from young people and building relationships would also be helpful as a way of boosting the effectiveness of the work. However, the most emphatic need for training identified in this research was with other agencies, as one external social worker described (53):

> "[The YOT] can provide a very good basic understanding of what you can do, what you can't do, … in terms of reintegrating the child back into the community … I think there's very little training in this area, and I think what happens, it gets

> slapped in your lap, and, you have to deal with it on the hoof…. We have MAPPA meetings which are excellent …and connections with both YOTs and probation etcetera, when they're under MAPPA, [but] I don't think they're as well forged as they should be … I think there's some mileage in doing joint training about that, and how you are going to manage, and progress the case where children are abusers because we don't tend really to think about the implications of children as abusers."

More training for other local professionals would improve understanding of sexual harm by young people and help to put in place the inter-agency relationships needed when an incident of sexual harm by a young person occurs. The challenges shown throughout the multi-agency chapter regarding the need for shared values, more clarity in communication and roles and better co-operation with resources all point to the need for training, and preferably joint training as identified by the worker above. She describes the positive connections encouraged by the MAPPA process but suggests that the relationships could be improved, and this was witnessed during many meetings attended throughout the research observation. In addition to training, good supervision and clear policies regarding inter-agency co-operation in cases of sexual harm by young people are also needed.

Clear policies regarding work with young people who have sexually harmed

Both MAPPA meetings and the local Assessment and Early Intervention Panel were seen as good models for inter-agency co-operation, although attendance at meetings was noted as disappointing at times with workloads or a lack of valuing the process stopping key professionals attending. The nature of the work at times on the boundaries of social work, youth justice and mental health requires inter-agency understanding and commitment. One senior staff member raised these issues in particular reference to young people who had been sexually exploited and went on to sexually harm others (57):

> "I do think it could be more effective if we had a better link between sexual exploitation and sexual harm… but I don't think there's honesty, and I don't think there's clarity within the Police in that whole process. I think the Assessment and Early Intervention Panel is a really good model for making those decisions… some of them are slightly arbitrary, whether kids are prosecuted, whether they're seen in and dealt with in mental health, or whether they go down the criminal

> justice route. … The holistic bit really needs to be all agencies signing up to that, and not just because you've got a fairly harsh copper, or a social worker that's not quite as keen, that it goes down one route or another… I would love us to be more honest about the links between that in the early days, and actually put some intervention in when kids are first involved in that exploitation, or have been abused at home, or around the home, and actually sort of work together".

Here the worker identifies the need for clarity and co-operation between agencies in decisions of how to help a young person who has sexually harmed, pointing out how decisions to prosecute and sentencing can seem arbitrary. She also emphasises the need to look earlier for indicators of concern such as abuse or sexual exploitation and the importance of preventative work.

In addition to local policies and procedures, national policies are urgently needed requiring the assessment and treatment of young people who have sexually harmed. The long-awaited Framework for young people who have sexually abused may be published before the examination of this thesis. It needs to address the 'postcode lottery of care' (Hackett, cited by Long, 2010) which leads to some young people receiving no service, some receiving a welfare service and others being sent through the criminal justice system. Access to specialist services such as those run by the NSPCC or private agencies such as G-MAP or SWAAY should be based on need rather than geography. This is complicated by the population spread across the country and the unknown number of cases, particularly when those who have not been prosecuted are considered.

More effectiveness research and shared practice

The agenda for more research into Evidence-Based Practice has been mentioned and is likely to develop over the coming years as useful but time-consuming studies are being completed into Multi-Systemic Therapy and other treatment methods. A more practical approach was suggested by some YOT staff in terms of sharing current experiences and good practice with other professionals, both face-to-face and via written media. One YOT worker proposed (68):

> "I think feedback is …vital, not just like feedback with your line manager, … I think that needs to … be taken somewhere so that can inform other practitioners… I've met practitioners from other teams, other YOTs, and I've

> shared things with them, and that's worked with me, likewise, they've shared things with me that has worked with them... I think it would be useful to have like practitioners' forums that, not necessarily just for this YOT, but it would encompass other YOTs. [On the Youth Justice Board website and in Youth Justice News] best practice is highlighted and people can adopt that, so definitely what we do is evidence based, ... I think for [researchers] to be able to get the theory right, it's good to come and see what's happening and that's all good for the future".

This could be a further role for a National Framework, facilitating the sharing of good practice and evidence by improving networking between specialists and local agencies. Sharing of evidence and good practice would also be a clear part of fulfilling an agency's training needs but requires sufficiently valuing by management to ring-fence time aside from day to day case management work. When staff caseloads are excessive, creativity and sharing good practice are much less possible.

Raising public and professional awareness and preventative work

Staff access to good evidence supporting holistic working was seen as necessary to advocate for young people who have sexually harmed to receive a thorough service. In the same way that members of the public may not understand issues of sexual harm and what is helpful, professionals within the court system and local authorities may also need to be made aware of arguments for a holistic approach. One social worker asserted (53):

> "there is something that's very important about having evidence that ... something works, ... if you need to represent children within the court arena... you can further meeting their needs holistically because you can argue that you have evidence to show that this can be beneficial ... so you actually can advocate more. I think if you've got an evidence-base ... you've got to convince people ... that it's worthwhile, ...because if you can't you've had it".

A lack of awareness amongst young people of the concerns and consequences of sexual harm was also raised by several interviewees, and this was seen as a strong argument for preventative work within schools or youth clubs. One YOT worker explained (51):

> "Often kids don't even know what the rules are, and what the boundaries are. ... They store all kinds of things on their computers, they're bombarded with all this stuff but they're not also given the tools to deal with it, and they're not always able or old enough to deal with it either. So I think there is a big role for using

> education in schools to help kids make better choices and to prevent things happening in the first place".

Preventative work could be delivered by education or health professionals provided that suitable training was made available. Alternatively, joint training could help share expertise and improve inter-agency relationships. As was discussed in chapter two, preventative work is gaining support from scholars but it requires funding additional to that providing assessment and intervention work with young people who have already sexually harmed. All these implications will be developed into recommendations for policy and practice in the final concluding chapter.

Chapter 10 – Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary - aims and context

The aims of this research have been to identify broadly accepted meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed; and to explore the associated benefits and implications for holistic working in practice with these young people. This chapter will outline the literature, methods and findings and draw conclusions about the contribution of the work; as well as the validity, reliability and generalisability of the findings. These will lead on to suggestions for further research and recommendations for policy and practice.

Importance of research area

The introduction and literature review outlined the importance of this area of research, including the fact that around a quarter of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by children and young people (NCH, 1992). The harm caused by sexual abuse is considerable, including increased risk of combined depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse (Kilpatrick et al., 2003). While many young people who have sexually harmed do not reoffend, a significant number of adult sexual offenders first sexually harmed as adolescents (Abel et al., 1987; Smallbone & Wortley, 2004). This suggests that early intervention work with young people who have sexually harmed should reduce future harm to children. There is also a strong case for this work in itself to help an unpopular group of young people with complex needs and vulnerabilities. Work with developing adolescents can help them understand why their actions were wrong, what influenced their behaviour and how they can avoid risky situations and further trouble. Practice with young people who have sexually harmed has grown from a simplistic use of adult methods, to an acknowledgement that this is a heterogeneous group with a range of needs who need a holistic approach (Hackett, 2007; Ryan, 1999). Despite the importance of this work, relatively little research has been carried out examining practice with these young people; and even less consulting the opinions of parents and the young people themselves (Hackett & Masson, 2006). The strengths of this research include a

broad and deep view of this work, incorporating views from policy, theory, management, practitioners, lay panel members, young people and a parent.

Complexity across disciplines

The history of responses to young people who have sexually harmed drew from the history of youth offending, historical recognition of child sexual abuse and the treatment of adult sex offenders. More recent scholarship regarding young people who have sexually harmed includes responses from the youth justice field, from social work research and from child and adolescent mental health professionals and this reflects the cross-disciplinary nature of the professionals who may be involved with these young people. The lack of clear guidance from the Government over who has responsibility for these young people and their entitlement to specialist services or mental health services has led to a range of service provision. In England and Wales, Youth Offending Teams hold responsibility for young people who have been convicted of sexual offences, and may have some limited involvement with others who are not convicted. Children's Services are likely to be involved with young people who have sexually harmed but not been charged or convicted, but their involvement may be brief and may focus on protecting a victim rather than working with the young person. Some young people who have sexually harmed may be referred by professionals to specialist services or mental health services, particularly in areas where few cases occur or when a case is considered to be particularly concerning. Geographical variations may lead a young person to receive a therapeutic service, a criminal justice sentence, social work support, a mixture of these or none of the above (Long, citing Hackett, 2010).

Need for clarity on buzzword: 'holistic'

The word holistic is used within all of these different professional contexts as part of how professionals should work with young people who have sexually harmed (Hackett et al., 2003; DH/Home Office, 2006; Bannister, 1998; Longo, 2002; Morrison & Henniker, 2006; Corby, 2006; Smith, 2007). The need to work holistically was highlighted alongside abuse-specific and multi-modal work within the Department of Health and Home Office guidance regarding effective treatment with young people who have sexually harmed

(DH/Home Office, 2006). Elaboration of the term holistic here was limited to a brief statement about promoting 'the physical, sexual, social and emotional well-being' (ibid.: p.45) of the young people while the multi-modal heading was used to include work with the young person's carers. However, many references to holistic from the literature include family work as well as the use of different methods of working. This supported the case for a more robust definition of holistic work before the benefits, challenges and implications could be explored. This research has provided a triangulated definition of holistic work, complementing and underpinning published clinical opinions by drawing on empirical data and a range of theories from the literature.

Different models from literature

Theoretical bases for working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed were drawn together in the holistic spectrum diagram repeated below.

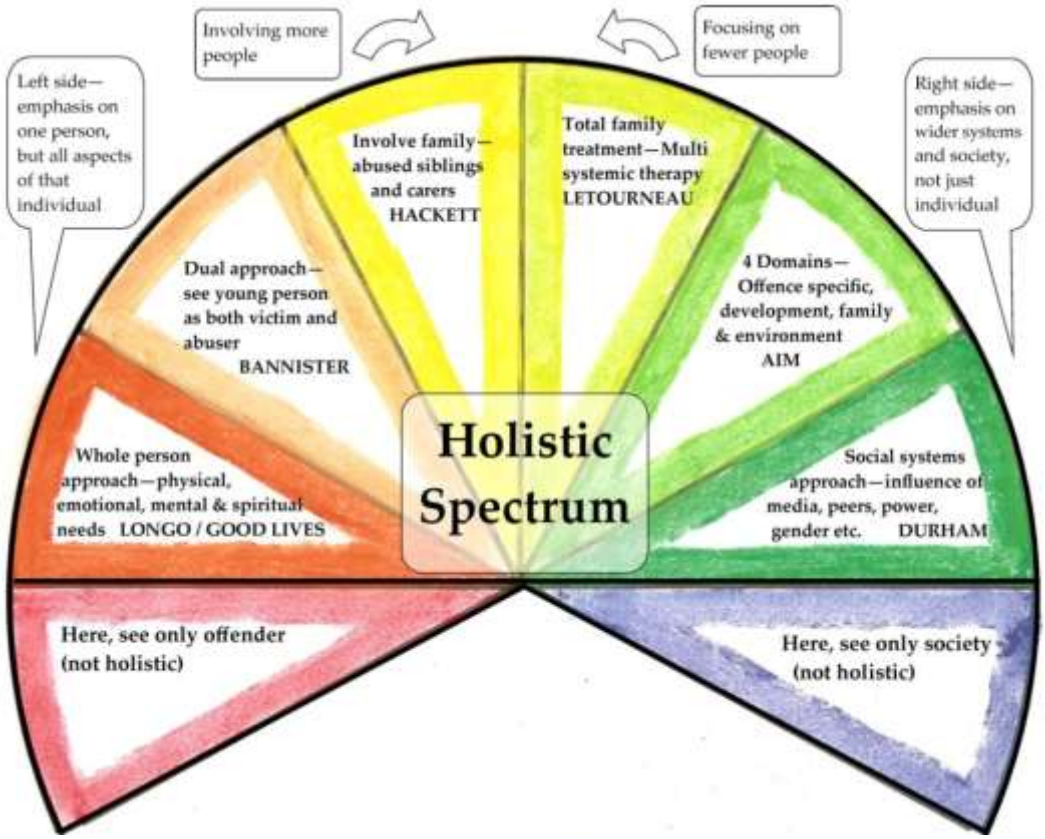

Figure 24. Spectrum of Holistic Theories for Work with Young People who have Sexually Harmed (repeated)

The holistic spectrum diagram moves from theories which stress the whole person as an individual on the left of the spectrum to theories which involve the family and finally which take a wider societal view of working holistically on the right of the spectrum. The literature review chapter also included key references to the combination of these elements from Rich (2003) and Bentovim (1998) and an important chapter from Morrison (2006) which laid the clearest foundation for a broader definition of holistic as was developed through this research. Different levels of holistic were identified, in terms of an over-arching ideology, an integration of models and ways of working and a description of more specific creative or eclectic methods. The majority of the findings related to the higher levels of adoption of a holistic ideology and working in a range of ways involving families and related professionals, while the use of creative and eclectic methods was found to be the final part of holistic working.

Fitting in to wellness, whole assessment, preventative agendas

In addition to theories from the field of tackling sexual harm, holistic working can also be seen to be located within wider movements key to social work, health, education and youth justice. The Department of Health *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families* (DH, 2000) outlines how a thorough view of the young person within their family and community context should inform assessment. This document was issued jointly with the Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office, promoting better shared understanding. Wellness models in health have been linked to diverse cultural ideas of whole person care and healing (Weaver, 2002; Leung et al., 2009). A focus on wellness or well-being and the importance of preventative measures for children and families is promoted by Prilleltensky and Nelson (2000); and this can be seen to be rising in emphasis within UK Government policy in particular the *Healthy Children, Safer Communities* (DH et al., 2009) document. After stressing the importance of preventing offending by early intervention and improved mainstream services, this document also advocates the use of holistic assessments and utilising family and community links. Similar mentions of wellbeing, prevention and early intervention also feature prominently in the *Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures* (DCSF/DH, 2009) document.

Challenges within what is evidenced, funded, known

These and other key Government documents also place a strong emphasis on evidence and evidence-based practice. The dominance of evidence-based practice within medicine is undeniable and appropriate in considering measurable effects of drugs and standardised treatments. However, the superiority of evidence-based methods in social fields including psychology, social work and youth justice is more open for debate (Webb, 2001; Wilcox, 2003). No programme or treatment method can be reproduced as precisely as a particular dose of a particular drug, and human factors such as relationships, sensitivity and engagement will all influence the effectiveness of any intervention. Standardised Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (SOTPs) have become typical within adult treatment, however the individual needs of developing children and adolescents have been stressed in arguing against treating young people as mini-adult sex offenders (Hackett et al., 2003).

The relative infrequency of reoffending by young people who have sexually harmed makes it difficult to demonstrate conclusive effectiveness of any treatment programme. This is compounded by the fact that additional measures regarding observation and controls on behaviour are alternative likely causes of behaviour change. Additionally the ethical arguments against leaving any group without treatment to be a 'control group' prohibit any randomised controlled trials with these young people. This has led to a paucity of evidence regarding 'what works' with young people who have sexually harmed, and the lack of widely validated actuarial instruments for assessing risk of sexual harm by juveniles (Parks, 2007; Epperson, 2009). Further trials into Multi-Systemic Therapy and other treatment methods and assessment tools including the JSORRAT-II (Epperson et al., 2006) should not be ignored, but the question of how conclusive any such evidence can be remains. Instead a broader approach to evidence seems advisable, sharing good and effective practice and seeking a range of positive outcomes for young people. This can be considered more in line with social work and education aims than a simple 'avoid reoffending' aim, although similar objectives should lead to reduced offending as well as addressing needs and promoting strengths. The need for measurable outcomes may be pushed by funding bodies and management but such outcomes should reflect a range of progress in areas like family relationships,

emotional coping and social skills as well as a lack of further incidents of sexual harm. The priority for this research was to understand practice now and how this could be improved rather than a trial of a particular holistic method.

Reflections on methods chosen

The aims of understanding meanings of holistic working and identifying benefits and implications for practice indicated the need for subjectivist research with an element of practice observation. Positivistic methods such as experiments or closed question surveys are not expected to reveal nuances of meaning to individuals, but instead focus on facts and measuring. Interviews and observation allow a much more thorough review of opinions and actions in relation to topics, but risk being seen as very specific to one location or subject team. A mixed methodology was chosen to combine the benefits of semi-structured interviews and observation with an initial broader open question survey. This strategy sought to draw meanings and key themes from a wider group of respondents from a range of agencies across the country, in combination with a careful review of the literature. These themes were then explored in more detail within one local team, with interview responses being complemented with observation of practice and meetings. In practice, the intention to utilise significant quantitative data was not fulfilled due to the relatively small numbers of survey participants. The initial survey provided data for triangulation but this would not be considered sufficiently robust by some theorists who require a strong quantitative element for research to be considered truly 'Mixed Methods', see O'Cathain et al. (2008) and Bergman (2008).

Data collected included completed surveys, interview transcripts, a field journal, copies of anonymised documents, emails and contact records as well as data-sets of cases of sexual harm and all YOT referrals over the past three years. The main analysis techniques used were from grounded theory; findings grounded in the data were generated through a process of line-by-line analysis, the development of codes and themes and on-going comparison of themes with data by processes of writing memos and further data collection. Themes found from the survey were discussed during the interviews and used to lead discussion around associated benefits, challenges and implications of the work. Theoretical saturation was achieved for the meanings of

holistic work; however, the findings relating to the challenges and implications of holistic work could be seen as more tentative. Within a longer research period these further findings could have been scrutinised and developed with more input from other professionals. Within the time available the methods used provided considerable insight into the target research areas and commitment from the researcher and participants led to significant findings.

Findings – what is holistic, four key themes but integrated whole

Four inter-connected main themes were identified to represent a definition of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed. These were seeing the whole young person, working with wider family and peers, working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. These four themes, with connecting arrows representing the need for communication and connections between the areas are presented in the diagram repeated below:

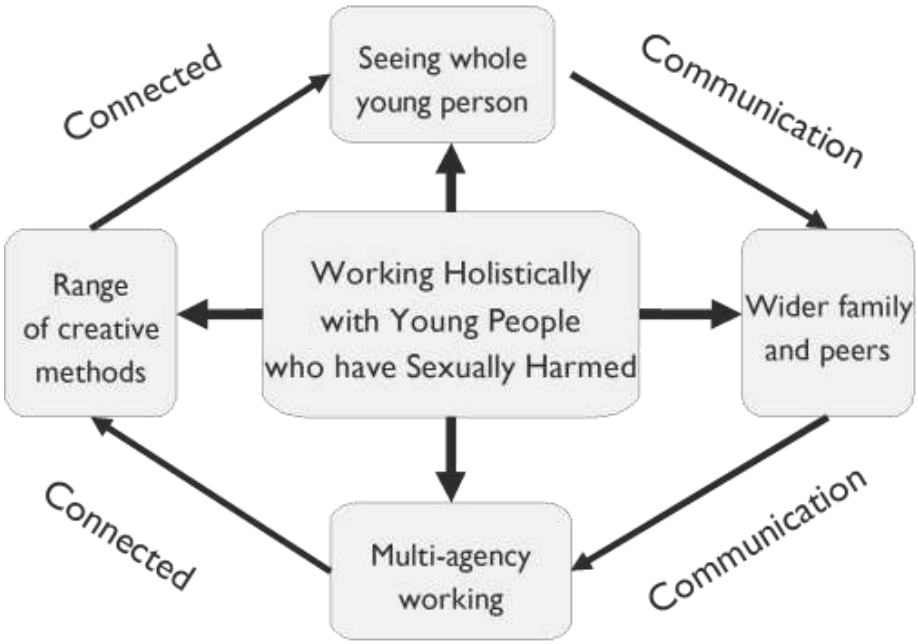

Figure 25. Main Themes of Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed (repeated)

The definition is better presented by an interconnected diagram than a paragraph of text. However, a written definition would be:

> *Working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed involves seeing the whole young person; working with their wider family and peers; working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods. Good communication and interaction between these four elements is crucial for a holistic approach.*

All four of these themes were supported within the literature, by the survey responses and within the interviews conducted at the Youth Offending Team, and with associated professionals. Definitions from Morrison (2006) and Bentovim (1998) included some reference to each of the four themes, with deeper theoretical grounding for individual themes given by other theories included on the holistic spectrum above. The need for a whole, integrated picture was evident in defining holistic working, as well as when assessing the young person and their wider context. Throughout the analysis and theory building a repeated concern was that while separating elements can be useful for diagrams and explanations, putting young people and their families or aspects of young people into boxes is generally unhelpful.

Seeing the whole young person

Perhaps the most frequently repeated message from the research was the need to consider the whole young person and not simply their offending or harmful behaviour. The importance of recognising the range of needs and strengths present for each individual young person was stressed, both in terms of being respectful of the young human being and in terms of identifying the most necessary areas for help and change. In setting out what was meant by the 'whole young person', this study presented a diagram based on the seven developmental areas from the *Common Assessment Framework* (CWDC, 2010a), which is repeated below:

Figure 26. Connected Segments to See the Whole Young Person who has Sexually Harmed (repeated)

The consideration of the harmful sexual behaviour is seen as a clear part of this picture, but in order to work holistically this needs to be in balance with other areas. Addressing a young person's experiences of being a victim of abuse was also seen as crucial by many staff and this is included under the emotional and social development segment. Different sections will be more significant for individual young people but all should be considered to gain a full picture.

Working with wider family and peers

The theme of working with a young person's family was seen to combine working with the family to address the family's needs and working with the family seeing them as co-workers able to support the young person. This incorporates the systemic view of a young person being embedded in a family and wider social networks and follows on from the consideration of family and social relationships being a segment in seeing the whole young person above. Five views of family influence were proposed, as presented in the diagram below:

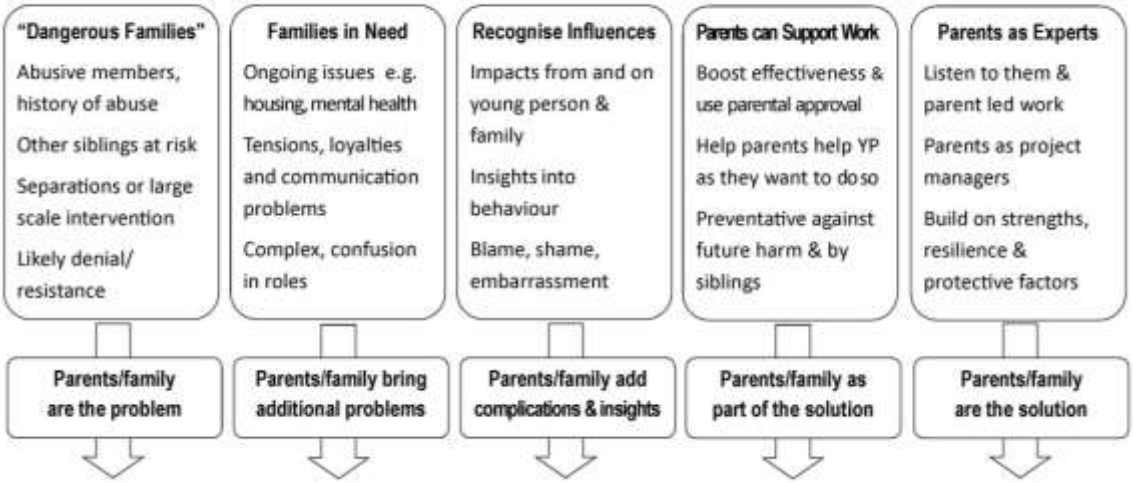

Figure 27. Five Views of Family Influence (extracted)

Again, caution has been stressed against the placing of any family in any one box, since most families can be considered in at least three of these areas. There will also be differences in perspective from various involved professionals. Similar patterns were shown from a young person's peers, considered another key influence contributing potential strengths as well as difficulties. Working holistically necessarily includes consideration of the young person's family, and usually to a lesser extent their peers, in terms of assessing needs, risks and strengths as well as understanding contributing factors and recruiting allies to help a young person.

Working in a multi-agency way

Contributions from a range of agencies are seen as essential for holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed, both to gain the full picture of the young person's and their family's needs and strengths, and to support the young person and their family. Good connections and communications between agencies are again seen as vital to a holistic approach, both within a multi-disciplinary YOT team and with external agencies. The range of professionals linked to key segments within the whole young person diagram above have been shown to have different targets and priorities, and the need to promote shared values and clarity of roles has been discussed. The need to improve inter-agency co-ordination was emphasised in the Hackett et al.'s (2003) Delphi study of practitioners and this is a frequent recommendation of serious case reviews, including the *Childhood Lost* (Bridge Child Care Development Service, 2001) report. Findings relating to multi-agency working were linked to three main sub-themes: values, clarity and resources, and these echoed findings from the literature regarding a number of challenges to multi-agency working in child protection (Atkinson et al., 2005; Charles & Stevenson, 1990; Morrison, 1992).

Using a range of creative methods

The final main theme found to be necessary for holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed was the use of both a variety of methods to engage the young person, and the specific use of creative methods such as art, drama, multi-media and practical activities. Activities advocated by professionals and the young people were considered under themes of visual learning, auditory learning, reading/writing learning and kinaesthetic learning. Methods which were seen to benefit or suit the young people were compared with those which perhaps suited professionals, management or the general public.

The influence of evidence-based practice was included under this theme and found to be understood differently by many professionals. Some professionals described practice which examined criminal evidence or recorded evidence of work completed rather than effective practice guided by an evidence-base. The demands of management and

funding bodies for work to be based on evidence were discussed but scepticism remained regarding the quality or amount of evidence available and the underlying agendas of those promoting it.

Benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed

Holistic working was found to have benefits at all stages of work with young people who have sexually harmed, from assessment to intervention and in terms of outcomes for young people, their families and the general public. During assessment, a holistic approach will ensure the young person is seen as a whole human being and that the full scope of needs and strengths they present will be recognised. A holistic approach to intervention will involve family members, other professionals and the use of creative methods to allow effective work addressing the identified needs and building on strengths and other protective factors. These should lead on to positive outcomes for young people and their families including improved family relationships and circumstances as well as changes to concerning behaviour and achievable future goals. Additionally positive outcomes for the public should include a reduction in future harm to children by using insights and thorough intervention to protect possible future victims.

Challenges related to holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed

The study has revealed a wide range of challenges to holistic working with these young people from the young people themselves, from their families, from staff members and from Government and policy sources. These were summarised in Figure 20 on p.219. In some situations the challenges faced were seen to inhibit holistic working, including some custodial and residential placements. Additionally the unstable funding arrangements for some specialist teams and bureaucratic demands on staff to 'cover themselves' and spend a lot of time on paperwork were seen to further limit the provision of a holistic service.

In addition to challenges impeding holistic practice, this study has considered some possible disadvantages to working holistically which need to be borne in mind for a comprehensive view of this area. While a holistic approach was seen as overwhelmingly positive by research participants, some critique from the literature was supported by the research findings. Cautions from Allen (2003) relate most clearly to the themes of seeing the whole young person and working in a multi-agency way.

The intrusion described by Allen (ibid., p.296) of staff into all areas of young people's lives in order to gain the power afforded by a holistic understanding offers a counter-balance to the potential benefits to young people of understanding their needs. The reluctance from some young people to share personal information or involve other family members can be conceived as an attempt to retain some autonomy. An example of practice (see p. 147-8) demonstrated how in some situations, a 'full-on' holistic approach may not be manageable for a young person. In this case, the respectful and sensitive response was argued to be a less intrusive, more targeted intervention. Other situations where a more targeted approach may be preferred may fit more clearly within a holistic framework, following a thorough holistic assessment. In some cases a more specific, limited response may be appropriate, particularly when the assessment has indicated a low level of needs and risks. This fits into the need for a measured and appropriate response.

Allen (2003) also argues that joined-up holistic power held by professional teams may leave the individual service-user isolated and blamed for any failures. This was illustrated in the research by discussions of some of the negatives within multi-agency approaches, which were seen at times to be 'ganging up' on parents or overpowering (see p.192). These concerns about the possible oppressive nature of some holistic work need to be considered alongside the benefits of a holistic approach, requiring an open and reflective stance from practitioners.

Implications of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed

An understanding of the benefits and challenges of holistic work with young people who have sexually harmed led to the identification of a number of implications from this study for future policy and practice. These comprise two main strands: necessary responses to better recognition of the needs of the young people and their families, and improvements to tackle some of the challenges inherent to the work. These strands were shown in Figure 23, on p.226.

A holistic view of the needs of the young people and their families will frequently lead to the identification of areas which require intervention from other agencies, reiterating the multi-agency emphasis. Recognition of common factors in the history of young people who have sexually harmed will suggest areas where preventative work would be helpful, including better services for young people who have witnessed domestic violence, been abused or been involved in sexual exploitation. The importance of good closure following emotive work was also stressed by a number of interviewees.

Other challenges were seen to have implications for changes in practice and policy, as seen on the right hand side of the diagram. Findings indicated the need for further training, both relating to creative methods but also general awareness-raising with associated professionals. The need for better inter-agency relationships included increasing shared values, clarity in roles and communication and better sharing of resources. Clearer policies were seen as essential, both on a local and a national level with associated commitment of staffing and financial resources. In order to improve effective practice, better sharing of 'what works' as well as more research into effective treatments were identified as necessary. Additional awareness-raising amongst professionals and the general public was also seen to be desirable, incorporating better training and preventative work within schools.

Evaluation and limitations of research

Originality and contribution to knowledge

This study is the first to consider a wide range of views of what holistic practice with these young people means; drawing on a diverse selection of models from the literature and incorporating the views of a considerable group of professionals rather than the individual experiences of one clinician or team. The originality of the research extends to include coverage of both the benefits and challenges of holistic work, and presents some potential disadvantages of holistic practice which allow a more comprehensive view of the topic.

Holistic practice is much more than just the use of some creative or alternative treatment methods, valuable though these may be. Working holistically includes many aspects of a humanistic approach, recognising individuality and personal strengths and needs as well as the need to see each young person within a wider context which includes their family and community of peers and supporting professionals. Effective work with a young person requires appropriate methods which will engage them and others who can help them learn and change.

The use of a mixed methods, grounded theory influenced approach ensured the generation of original data which has been analysed creating new theoretical concepts. The original contribution from this research includes the four strand definition of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed as well as the spectrum of theoretical influences for holistic work. The four strand definition complements and adds to previous definitions by Bentovim (1998) and Morrison (2006) through original empirical findings which reinforce clinical expertise and opinion. The segments diagram representing the whole young person combines the previous factors of child development from the Common Assessment Framework (CWDC, 2010a) with original findings more specific to young people who have sexually harmed. The five views of family influence concept is also original to this research and could have wider relevance for work with families of young people with complex needs including other offending or concerns regarding abuse or neglect. Each of these theoretical contributions has

potentially a wider usefulness to professionals working with young people in a holistic way and considering a broader context for intervention.

Quality of data – validity, generalisability and reliability

The findings of this research were all grounded in the data gathered and have been supported by direct quotations from professionals, lay panel members, young people and a parent. The preliminary findings of the four main themes were confirmed by professionals during the interview stage of the research. The research placement included staff observation within a YOT environment considered fairly representative of the national situation, albeit within a particular city with higher than average crime rates and lower than average employment and educational achievement. The validity of the data used is high, with good access to real life practice and computer records.

The mixed methods approach used aimed to improve the generalisability of the data, involving professionals from across England and Wales in the survey stage of the research although in practice, the sample size was relatively small. The findings relating to meanings of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed still have the strongest external validity. The focus on one team for the remainder of the study does make the later findings more specific to that location and less generalisable. The available time also prevented further iterations of research which could have tested the findings relating to the benefits, challenges and implications of holistic working, leading to enhanced reliability of the work.

Efforts to increase reliability of the work included the use of approximate interview schedules (Appendices 13-16) and the standardised presentation of the questionnaire in the breadth study (Appendix 3). While the subjective nature of interviews may be considered to produce less reliable data, the scope for better understanding of issues is also important. A clear example can be found in the discussion of evidence-based practice which received a range of responses from the questionnaire. Only through more detailed interviews did it become clear that there was a wide variation of understanding of the meaning of 'evidence-based practice' which illuminated the earlier responses. Here the validity of the data is improved by using a method that might be considered

less reliable. The clear presentation of methods used would allow similar studies to be repeated or the data to be reanalysed by another researcher by means of a clear audit trail as advocated by Mason (2002). The analysis process has also been made more explicit by the inclusion of an example showing the development of the original 'Five Views of Family Influence' diagram in chapter four. Following data protection guidelines the anonymised data could also be made available to other researchers in the future.

Limitations of the study

Throughout the research the limitations of the study and effects of the researcher have been noted. Ethical constraints prevented the observation of any intervention work with young people which could have given a more accurate picture of how far the team worked holistically. The contributions from young people and parents were limited by the low numbers who were accessible and willing to take part. However, the focus on the professionals' viewpoints was explained to be preferable since they have a wider outlook on working holistically with a number of different clients. Possible biases of the researcher have been acknowledged, but balanced by the use of theories grounded in the data and on-going reflection and memo writing.

The limited number of participants did prevent the use of statistical analyses of responses which could have more fully met the requirements of 'quality inferences' as described by Tashakkori & Teddlie (2008) and sought by O'Cathain et al. (2008). A larger sample would also have increased the generalisability of the findings. One subsequent suggestion from a student is the use of 'read receipts' to improve response rates to email surveys, and this would be one thing to do differently in the future. The number of interviews and observation days could also have been higher but restrictions of time and availability as well as a desire to complete the research in a timely manner led to a balance being set between data collection and thorough analysis.

Restrictions of time also prevented the presentation of the later findings to participants who could have provided useful insights, confirmation and validation. Another kind of triangulation from a fellow researcher could also have increased the reliability of the

findings but this was only available to a limited degree with consideration of some data by the first supervisor within appropriate boundaries of the supervisory arrangements.

Further research indicated

Further discussions and interviews with local or other professionals testing out the findings of this research would add generalisability and allow the benefits, challenges and implications to be considered more robust findings. Interesting findings relating to links with sexual exploitation, or staff attitudes to evidence-based practice could be further developed with additional questions or carefully selected interviewees. More integrated research with a team could explore efforts to work in a more holistic manner using more participative, action-research methods. Inter-agency relationships could also be usefully examined in this way. A different focus on working holistically to reduce sexual harm would necessarily include more investigation of preventative work and work with victims of sexual harm. More young person centred research with carefully negotiated access to young people who have sexually harmed could allow further understanding of what young people find helpful and their motivation to involve or exclude other family members in intervention work.

The importance of effective practice and evidence-based practice deserves further exploration within the wider fields of youth justice and social work; not simply in terms of trials to demonstrate the effectiveness of specific intervention methods, but considering more basic questions of the dominant agendas, the choices of measurable outcomes and perhaps 'what helps' rather than 'what works'. A review of the Professional Certificate of Effective Practice course and more scrutiny of training provided and interventions used would be useful. This could assess the standards being applied to identify effective practice and how influential these are in front-line practice. Critical evaluation of any new Government strategies regarding young people who have sexually harmed and their implementation would also constitute significant research comparing the importance of a holistic approach with new guidelines, priorities and available resources.

The most original findings suggest further application with a range of young people with complex needs and lead the researcher to prioritise development and publication of the 'Five Views of Family Influence' theory as well as wider consideration of the segments model for seeing the whole young person. In terms of usefulness for practitioners, these models and further research into ways of engaging young people would perhaps constitute the most necessary future research.

Recommendations for practice and policy

These recommendations will be shared with the research participants, but are also considered relevant to other professionals and policy makers seeking to advocate holistic practice with young people who have sexually harmed.

Assessment of young people who have sexually harmed should be holistic

The on-going assessment process will require input from the young person, their family and other professionals; and should aim to get a broad view of the whole young person, including their individual needs and strengths. In addition to understanding the harmful sexual behaviour and any other offending behaviour, the assessment should consider the young person's health, learning, family and social relationships, emotional and social development, self-care skills and personal identity. The use of risk assessment tools may contribute to this process but these require critical interpretation, particularly where they focus on mainly static, historical factors or atomise the young person. Commitment from a multi-agency team should be gained to work to address the needs and risks identified as well as seeking to boost the strengths and protective factors present in the young person, and in their family and peers environment.

Intervention work with young people who have sexually harmed should be holistic

Following on from a holistic assessment, intervention work should also be delivered in a holistic manner. In some low concern cases, limited targeted intervention may be

pursued where this is considered most beneficial for the young person and their family as a whole. However, where serious concerns and needs have been identified, a holistic approach should involve the young person, their family and other key professionals wherever possible. Holistic work will address the whole young person, will seek to support and gain support from the young person's family, will involve workers from a range of agencies and will utilise a range of creative methods. The need to engage the young person and their family argues strongly for a personalised approach, suggesting that rigid, repeated programmes for individuals or groups are unlikely to provide a holistic service.

Further training is needed across agencies regarding young people who have sexually harmed

In order to provide a more holistic service, better inter-agency involvement requires training across social work, education, health, residential care, police and YOTs. Aims should be raising awareness about factors contributing to sexual harm by young people and ways of working together to address it. Staff need to be aware of local and national policies and supported to give time to relevant intervention and preventative work. Challenging attitudes which seek to avoid the issue or harshly judge the young people is important to increase commitment to attending meetings, sharing information and making appropriate referrals. Improved awareness will increase confidence in effective working and reduce short-sighted decisions to refuse to work with a young person or to exclude them from educational or other opportunities.

Clearer policies regarding sexual harm by young people

Providing a holistic service for young people and their families requires commitment at a local and national level. Local YOT teams and Child Safeguarding Boards should have clear policies regarding young people who have sexually harmed to ensure a fair and balanced service is provided. Inter-agency protocols should include time for thorough assessments before sentencing, and should seek to include young people who do not proceed through the court process. Access to specialists should be available according to

the needs and risks identified, and where necessary joint funding should be pursued via a multi-agency forum.

National policies should address the inequalities across provision for young people who have sexually harmed, and ensure that services are adequately funded and accessible. Sharing of best practice should be encouraged at a national level while further research into effective practice also continues. A national audit of young people who have sexually harmed may be necessary to understand the distribution of cases including severity and to ensure that the highest concern young people are receiving the most intensive service. The use of residential treatment should be reviewed to discover whether this is the most appropriate service for the young people, or whether it has been chosen by authorities with sufficient funding or without appropriate local services. Where residential treatment is seen as the best option every effort should be made to include the young person's family in some treatment and to facilitate good reintegration where possible.

More shared practice and effectiveness research

There is still a great deal to be learnt about the range of holistic interventions which may be helpful for work with young people who have sexually harmed. Policies at a local and national level should include the encouragement of sharing best practice and practical research into what helps young people and their families. Websites including those hosted by the Youth Justice Board and the NSPCC may be sources of good practice sharing and these should be developed with access available to a wide range of professionals. Training events should also include sharing of good practice while intervention manuals could be developed with integral feedback systems, perhaps issued in a 'beta version'. Knowledge from specialist training and resources should be cascaded throughout local authorities, with more staff holding training remits to pass on what they have learnt. Research into effective interventions should be facilitated at a local level, as well as wider clinical studies using links between training institutions and practice centres.

Raising awareness and preventative work

It has also been suggested that a holistic approach by practitioners should go beyond helping young people who have sexually harmed and their families. Increasing public awareness of sexual harm, including harm by young people fits within a wider agenda of acknowledging abuse of children and seeking to prevent it. National campaigns by organisations such as the NSPCC, Barnardo's and Action for Children are seeking to increase recognition that harm to children is usually not from strangers but from people known to the child, and this could be expanded to include from young people as well as adults. Responsible journalism could increase understanding, rather than simply sensationalising cases and demonising paedophiles. This would require a level of co-operation from services who would need to balance carefully the confidentiality of individual young people and their families, with the need to raise more general awareness.

Preventative work within schools, and with specific young people considered to be at higher risk of causing sexual harm deserves further support. Simple guidelines about ok and not ok touching should be integral to early relationships education, with more information about the law and consequences of sexual behaviour being given to older children and teenagers. A culture encouraging talking about unwanted sexual contact and promoting responsible dating behaviour should increase reporting of sexual harm and offences. Effective earlier intervention with younger perpetrators should protect further victims, as well as helping to address the wider associated needs of the young person. While most young people will not go on to reoffend, preventing any young perpetrator from becoming an adult sex offender could protect an unknown number of child victims. Intervening while a young person is still developing has the greatest hope for change and saves much greater future spending on the incarceration, treatment and supervision of adult sex offenders. The cost of good preventative work is one society cannot afford *not* to pay.

Success against aims and objectives

This study has successfully identified broadly accepted meanings of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, filling a gap in knowledge around this popular but vaguely defined concept. A thorough theoretical base from a spectrum of holistic approaches was gained from the literature, and a broad collection of sources were analysed to identify themes grounded in the data. The four main areas identified: seeing the whole young person, working with wider family and peers, working in a multi-agency way and using a range of creative methods received good confirmation from professionals within the field and are supported in the literature. The integrated combination of these areas is necessary to allow a holistic approach which is more than the sum of parts, just as a holistic view of the whole young person is more than the sum of identified areas of needs and strengths.

Each theme presented associated benefits, challenges and implications of a holistic approach, and these were demonstrated using further quotations and examples from practice. These original findings would benefit from further confirmation through future research; but connections can be drawn with other related literature regarding effective multi-agency working, involving family members and developing effective practice. The methodological choices have been justified and evaluated to show good validity and efforts to increase generalisability and reliability. Finally, recommendations have been made for further research and developments of policy and practice on a local and national level. A holistic approach to understanding the topic of 'working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed' has been attempted, using a range of research methods to view a wide picture of the research area and seeking to triangulate results to gain integrated and robust findings. Such a broad topic will always merit further exploration but a thorough assessment is an important first stage. The challenge remains to proceed to intervention and put positive holistic changes into practice.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. De Montfort University Ethical Approval for Survey

www.dmu.ac.uk
DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY
LEICESTER • BEDFORD

Feb 06 version

De Montfort University, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences Research and Commercial Office

APPLICATION FORM FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

>>>FORMS MUST BE SIGNED<<<
>>>PLEASE USE ORDINARY LANGUAGE AND AVOID JARGON<<<

Title of proposed project/research activity – include module title where appropriate

Exploring implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed

PhD (Community & Criminal Justice) 1st Stage – Survey

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING AN APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

The Faculty Ethics Committee requires those partaking in research activities to consider the ethical and safety implications of their work and where necessary apply for necessary ethical clearance from within our Faculty and from external bodies.
The ethical approval form is essential to planning a piece of research activity. Application forms completed by UG, PGT students must be returned to the relevant administrative or academic staff involved with the particular module. Application forms completed by PG Research students or staff should be returned to the Faculty Research and Commercial Office, room H.036, e-mail HLSRO@dmu.ac.uk.

Start date for the project:…14/02/08….. Expected end date for the project…30/06/08

Researcher's/Student's Name and e-mail address
Sharon Hall [email address]

Module Leader's, Supervisor's Name or Project Director's Name
Brian Stout

Brief Description of proposed activity and its objectives

I plan to consult professionals who work with young people who have sexually harmed, with the aim of testing out the findings of my Master's interview study and identifying ways forward in my PhD research. I want to use a survey to gather a wider range of opinions on the meanings of working holistically with this client group and to gain more generalisability on my data so far. I also hope to use the contacts I make to identify a team to work with more closely in the later stages of my PhD research. The survey will be available online or in paper form. Participants will be asked to share my contact details and web-links with other professionals who might be willing to participate.

Ethical Issues Identified	How these will be addressed
Confidentiality of personal details	Locked storage of identifiable data and the use of codes on any printed material.
Confidentiality of client details	No client details will be requested – only fictional case examples will be used.
Pressure on practitioners to participate	Stressing how participation is voluntary and consent may be withdrawn at any point.
Confidentiality of data submitted online	Use of a service with SSL (secure socket layers) as well as notifying participants that any internet usage may not be totally secure. Offering the option to complete survey by post.

To which ethical code of conduct have you referred to?
For example British Sociological Association, ESRC, British Psychological Association

British Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics for research and ESRC.

How have the requirements of those involved with the research whose first language may not be English been addressed?

Not anticipated as professionals working in UK expected to use English.

List of accompanying documentation to support the application:
(1) A copy of the Research proposal
(2) The details of arrangements for participation of human or animal subjects or material, (including recruitment, consent and confidentiality procedures and documentation as appropriate) [Yes √ No □]
(3) A copy of all the documentation provided to the volunteer to ensure the clarity of information provided
[Yes √ No □]
(4) Copies of appropriate other ethical committee permissions (internal or external) or supporting documentation [Yes □ No √]
(5) A list of proprietary drugs or commercial drugs to be used in the proposed investigation including formulation, dosage and route of administration and known adverse side effects [Yes □ No √]
(6) A brief one page curriculum vitae for each applicant, including recent publications [Yes √ No □]
(7) Other Documentation:

Signature of researcher/student Sharon C Hall date 13/2/08

Signature of project director /supervisor(s) date

Appendix 2. Participant Information Sheet (Version 2.0) Feb. 08 [Breadth Survey]

Study Title: Exploring implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please feel free to ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the study about? There is increasing reference to working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, but no clear framework and little literature describing how this can be achieved. The researcher's Master's study identified a range of definitions of holistic working after interviewing six professionals who work in the field. This survey is designed to test out these results and identify ways forward to investigate more implications and benefits of holistic working.

Why have I been chosen? Participants are sought from varied professional groups who work with young people who have sexually harmed. Contacts from previous research and conferences will be asked to pass on the survey details to their contacts and colleagues.

Who is involved in the study? The study is led by a research student from the Community and Criminal Justice Division at De Montfort University, Leicester with the supervision of departmental staff.

Do I have to take part? No, the study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you are advised to keep a copy of this information sheet and you will be asked to register your consent to take part. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw from the study at any time. You do not need to give a reason if you wish to withdraw.

What is involved? The survey is administered online from the researcher's own website, www.wildgoosetherapy.com/research and uses software from Wufoo.com. Printed copies are available for any participants who would prefer to receive and return the survey by post. The survey asks for the participant's own views on what it means to work holistically before asking for opinions on previously drawn statements. Views are further requested on three summary diagrams and there is the option of commenting on fictional case vignettes used in the earlier research. Completion of the full survey should take 30-60 minutes. Participants may also be invited to take part in a follow up survey to refine the results.

What happens to the information? All the information is confidential. No one will be able to identify you from the study. Wufoo.com offers secure SSL (secure socket layers) on the form data which should protect all submitted information, however like most internet use this cannot be 100% guaranteed. No participants are expected to share any sensitive information. The notes taken by the researcher and the data files will be kept safely in locked files and only the researcher and supervisor can see them. Printed data will only have codes and not names in order to safeguard confidentiality. All data will be treated in accordance with the current Data Protection Act.

What if I wish to complain? Please raise any difficulties or questions with the researcher in the first instance. Sharon can be contacted on [phone number] or by email at [email address]. If you have any major concerns please contact her supervisor, Principal Lecturer Dr Brian Stout on [phone number] or [email address].

What will happen to the results of the study? The results of the study will form the first stage of the researcher's PhD Thesis and will be subject to academic scrutiny. The results will be made available following the marking of the study in 2010. You will be able to receive a copy of a summary of the results if you wish. No individual or organisation will be identified in any report.

Who is organising and funding the study? The study is organised by the researcher in the Community & Criminal Justice Division at De Montfort University. The researcher is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The study has been passed by the University Research Ethics Committee.

Contact for further information: If you would like any further information about the study please contact Sharon Hall on [phone number]. Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I am very grateful for your participation in this study. Sharon Hall

Appendix 3. Main survey instrument

Main Survey - Parts A & B

A survey conducted by Sharon Hall of De Montfort University, Leicester.

All participants should be professionals working with young people who have sexually harmed, and should have read the Information Sheet about this study.

Part A

Please fill in Part A of the questionnaire based on your own experiences and opinions, BEFORE reading through the rest of the survey. Your views are very important. Later your opinions on the preliminary results will be requested, however this research will be less effective if participants are swayed to give the answers they think are wanted, are 'correct' or that have already been suggested by the researcher. Thank you.

Email address *

Please indicate your consent to take part in this study: *

- [ ] I have read the Information Sheet about this survey
- [ ] I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time.
- [ ] I give my informed consent to participate in this survey.

Gender

- ( ) Female
- ( ) Male

Ethnicity

- ( ) Asian or Asian British
- ( ) Black or Black British
- ( ) Chinese or other ethnic group
- ( ) Mixed
- ( ) White

Age

- ( ) Under 30
- ( ) 30 - 39
- ( ) 40 - 49
- ( ) 50 - 59
- ( ) 60 or over

Employer

County

Job title

What is your work background? Please tick all that apply:

- ☐ Social Work
- ☐ Youth Justice
- ☐ Therapy/Counselling
- ☐ Youth Work
- ☐ Probation
- ☐ Residential Care
- ☐ Another very different profession

How would you say your work background influences your working style?

Would you say your main remit was more one of a...

- ○ Social worker
- ○ Therapist
- ○ Probation Officer
- ○ Youth Worker
- ○ Manager

What proportion of a full work week (about 37 hours) do you spend working with young people who have sexually harmed, or related work with their families etc?

- ◉ Less than 3% (under 1hr per week)
- ○ Between 3% and 20%
- ○ Between 20% and 40%
- ○ Between 40% and 60%
- ○ Between 60% and 80%
- ○ Over 80%

Examples: Chris works full-time in a YOT. About 1/4 of her caseload have sexually harmed so she ticks 20-40%.

Mark works part-time, 20 hours for a specialist SHB team. He works out this is about half of a full week so ticks 40-60%.

How many years have you worked in your current post?

How would you describe your team ethos / style of working / main aims?

Would you say your team work holistically? What does/would it mean to work holistically?

Can you identify any key influences or theories that make your team holistic?

How could your team be more holistic?

What might be the opposite of holistic working, and what might this look like?

Part B

The following statements were drawn from the preliminary research, although some were given as contrasting views not held by the participants. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement.

1) Working holistically means having a broad perspective - seeing the whole young person.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2) Working holistically means working with the young person's family as well as with the individual.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3) Working holistically means having a multi-agency partnership approach rather than one agency.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4) Working holistically means identifying and tackling wider social systems issues.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5) Working holistically means using creative and alternative treatment techniques.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6) Working holistically means delivering wider preventative work as well as working with individuals.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7) Working holistically means staying focused on the refering incident or offence.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

8) Working holistically means using only evidence-based methods.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9) Working holistically means including addressing the young person's own victim experiences.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10) Working holistically means being flexible about boundaries around attendance and co-operation.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11) Working holistically means connecting and communicating well with family and other professionals.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Ambivalent
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please choose which 4 of the above statements are most important in defining working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed.

Optional - Please use this field to include any further clarification or comments on the statements.

Submit

Appendix 4. De Montfort University Ethical Approval for Depth Study

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

APPLICATION FORM FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITY REQUIRING HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS CONSIDERATION OR APPROVAL

Staff/Student Name	**Programme (if relevant)**
Sharon Hall	PhD within Community & Criminal Justice Division.

Title of Research Project

Exploring implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed
PhD (Community & Criminal Justice) 3rd Stage – Research Placement

Brief description of proposed activity and its objectives:

I intend to undertake a research placement at [City] Youth Offending Team for 3 months, attending 2 days per week. During this time I will observe and interview staff, connected professionals and if possible some young people (aged 14 - 19) and their parents/carers who have finished working with the team. I will also have access to the computerised records kept by the YOT. My objectives are to gain a more practical understanding of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, to understand more of the challenges and implications and to see different perspectives on the process.

Ethical issues identified:	**How these will be addressed:**
Protection of client & workers confidentiality Gaining permission from outside agencies Gaining informed consent from young people and carers	All notes and transcripts will have codes, not names Professionals will be asked to confirm permission Clear information sheet for young people and carers, and chance for withdrawal

To which ethical codes of conduct have you referred? These are specific to each Faculty and if you have a query please ask your supervisor or Faculty REC for advice.

British Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics for research and ESRC

Checklist for applicant:

Has the research proposal identified any of the following research procedures?

1. Gathering information about human beings through: Interviewing, Surveying, Questionnaires, Observation of human behaviour
2. Using archived data in which individuals are identifiable
3. Researching into illegal activities, activities at the margins of the law or activities that have a risk of personal injury
4. Supporting innovation that might impact on human behaviour e.g. Behavioural Studies

Have you considered the following? (tick boxes beneath for "YES"):

☐√ Providing participants with full details of the objectives of the research
☐√ Providing information appropriate for those whose first language is not English
☐√ Voluntary participation with informed consent
☐√ Written description of involvement
☐√ Freedom to withdraw
☐√ Keeping appropriate records
☐√ Signed acknowledgement and understanding by participants
☐√ Consideration of relevant codes of conduct/guidelines

Are there other/additional factors that could/will give rise to ethical concerns? E.g. language difficulties

No language difficulties anticipated as UK professionals and likely service users will use English

List of accompanying documentation to support the application:

(1) A copy of the research proposal
(2) The details of arrangements for participation of human subjects (including recruitment, consent and confidentiality procedures and documentation as appropriate)
(3) A copy of all the documentation provided to the volunteer to ensure the clarity of information provided
(4) Copies of appropriate other ethical committee permissions (internal or external) or supporting documentation
(5) If appropriate: a list of proprietary drugs or commercial drugs to be used in the proposed investigation including formulation, dosage and route of administration and known adverse side effects
(6) A statement of your competence to carry out this research as a student or a brief one page curriculum vitae for each applicant, including recent publications (staff only)
(7) Other documentation as advised necessary:

There are four possible outcomes from reviewing the activity against the procedures in place:

1. no ethical issues
2. minor ethical issues which have been addressed and concerns resolved
3. major ethical issues which have been addressed and concerns resolved
4. ethical issues that have not been resolved/addressed

Appendix 5. Placement Agreement between Researcher and YOT

Placement Outline

Background

Sharon Hall (the researcher) is a PhD Student at De Montfort University in Leicester. She is studying within the Community & Criminal Justice Division, supervised by Dr Brian Stout and Professor Hazel Kemshall. Her topic is "Exploring the implications and benefits of working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed". She is building on her Master's in Research where the topic "What does it mean to work holistically with young people who sexually harmed" was the subject of her successful dissertation. Her Master's research involved interviewing six professionals from within the field. Previously (2004-2006) Sharon worked as an integrative therapist (professionally a Dramatherapist) at the Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour Team within Birmingham Youth Offending Service.

The early stages of her PhD research have involved a questionnaire study among professionals which tested out the conclusions of her Master's research. She has also set up an internet discussion forum to discuss these findings and other relevant topics further. She is now seeking to research the practical outworking of holistic methods by observation, interviews and action research within a relevant team environment.

[City] Youth Offending Team work with local young people who have sexually harmed who are on community orders. They have a lead practitioner in this field and other YOT Officers who hold cases and consult with the lead practitioner but also hold cases of young people who have committed non-sexual offences. Other relevant young people have contact with the team but are in distant residential or custodial facilities. They have professional liaisons with Children's Services, MAPPA and other local agencies.

Proposal

It is proposed that the researcher attends the team for two days a week for a period of three months as a field work placement. She will hot-desk within the YOT offices for these days, observing and joining in discussions as far as these are not disruptive to the daily activities of the team. She will attend some team meetings and contribute to plans for training days for external professionals.

The researcher will conduct one or two interviews with relevant team members around the topic of holistic working. These interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed, with any identifiable names or places being disguised. Written consent will be gained for each interview. The researcher will also arrange interviews with professionals from partner agencies to discuss their ideas of holistic working and the practical implications they have found of working with the team. These interviews will be similarly recorded, transcribed and anonymised and feedback will be shared with the team.

Where possible, the researcher will be involved in an action research capacity in team development and initiatives. This will involve contributing to training offered to external professionals and participating in the team's efforts to develop a more systemic way of working.

The researcher will attempt to gain access to interview one or two former clients of the service and/or their families. This will be assisted by the team admin staff who will forward a request from the researcher to a number of former clients. If any former clients agree, they or their family members will be interviewed in the team offices. Written consent will be gained and the interviews will be recorded, transcribed and anonymised as above. These interviews will focus more on the client or family's experience of working with the team, rather than any specific incidents of harmful sexual behaviour. They will be asked who was involved in helping them, what they found most helpful and any things that they think could have been better.

Further activities may be negotiated with the team as opportunities arise. Viewing of client files to understand the ways the team works will be undertaken if permission is granted.

Ethics

References from the researcher's supervisor and previous employment may be taken up by the team.

The researcher will fund a new police check if required.

All research will be conducted according to ethical guidance from the British Association of Social Workers and the Economic & Social Research Council. The research will also have been approved by the De Montfort University Faculty Ethics Board. This will include concealing the identity of the team and all individuals in written notes and reports. All data will be securely stored in locked files according to Data Protection guidance.

Any concerns regarding Child Protection will be discussed promptly with the team manager or another designated manager.

Practical details

The researcher will not require any admin support from the team other than the forwarding of letters to former clients as identified above. Any photocopying will be funded by the researcher.

Supervision is provided by the university and will not be required from the placement. However, a monthly checking in will be agreed between the researcher and the manager, with other discussions to be arranged as required by either party.

Provided that the CRB check and De Montfort Ethical Approval are successfully completed, the placement will begin on 6th January 2009.

Signed. Date …

Signed..Sharon C Hall..... Date ..17/11/08.....
Sharon Hall, Research Student

Appendix 6. Participant Information Sheet (Version 4.2) Feb. 09 [Depth Study]

Study Title: Exploring implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please feel free to ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the study about? There is increasing reference to working holistically with young people who have sexually harmed, but no clear framework and little literature describing how this can be achieved. The researcher's Master's study identified a range of definitions of holistic working which were presented in a survey to a wider group of professionals. The research placement and interviews are designed to allow further exploration of the issues and identify more implications, challenges and benefits of holistic working.

Why have I been chosen? Participants are sought from varied professional groups who work with young people who have sexually harmed. While on placement at [City] YOT, the researcher hopes to interview a range of professionals who are involved with working with these clients.

Who is involved in the study? The study is led by a research student from the Community and Criminal Justice Division at De Montfort University, Leicester with the supervision of departmental staff. [City] YOT have offered the placement, and will receive general feedback from interviews but individual responses will remain confidential.

Do I have to take part? No, the study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw from the study at any time. You do not need to give a reason if you wish to withdraw.

What is involved? If you are willing, the research student will arrange a convenient time and place to interview you. Ethical approval will be sought from your employer if this is required. The interview will last around an hour and will be digitally recorded. The interview will focus around issues of holistic working and your views and experiences, without asking for any specific client details. Some participants may be asked to consider a further optional interview later in the study to discuss some of the arising issues. This process may also be conducted by an email questionnaire.

What happens to the information? All the information is confidential. No one will be able to identify you from the study. The recordings from interviews are transcribed (listened to and written down in full). A copy of the transcribed interview will be available for the interviewee at their request. The notes taken by the researcher, the recordings and the transcripts will be kept safely in locked files and only the researcher and supervisor can see them. Notes, recordings and transcripts will only have codes and not names in order to safeguard confidentiality. At the end of the research the recordings will be erased. All data will be treated in accordance with the current Data Protection Act.

What if I wish to complain? Please raise any difficulties or questions with the researcher in the first instance. Sharon can be contacted on [phone number] or by email at [email address]. If you have any major concerns please contact her supervisor, Principal Lecturer Dr Brian Stout on [phone number] or [email address].

What will happen to the results of the study? The results of the study will form the main stage of the researcher's PhD Thesis and will be subject to academic scrutiny. The results will be made available following the marking of the study in 2010. You will be able to receive a copy of a summary of the results if you wish. No individual or organisation will be identified in any report.

Who is organising and funding the study? The study is organised by the researcher in the Community & Criminal Justice Division at De Montfort University. The researcher is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). The study has been passed by the University Research Ethics Committee.

Contact for further information: If you would like any further information about the study please contact Sharon Hall on [phone number]. Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I am very grateful for your participation in this study. Sharon Hall

Appendix 7. Consent form for interviews with professionals

Working Holistically with Young People who have Sexually Harmed

Study Number:.....
Participant Identification Number for this study:.....

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Exploring implications and benefits of holistic working with young people who have sexually harmed

Name of Researcher: Sharon Hall

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated ..... (version .....) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, without my confidentiality or legal rights being affected. ☐

3. My employer has given permission for me to participate in this study, or this is not needed. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature

When completed, 1 for participant; 1 for researcher file.

Appendix 8. Initial contact letter to young people

[YOT Address]

28th January 2009

dmu.ac.uk
DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY
LEICESTER

Dear …….

My name is Sharon Hall and I am a research student at De Montfort University in Leicester. I used to work with young people at Birmingham Youth Offending Service. I am doing some research into improving the way YOTs work and understanding better how workers can see the whole picture when trying to help young people.

Just to reassure you, the admin staff at [City] YOT agreed to pass this on for me. Unless you agree, I will not receive any of your personal details.

If you agreed to meet me, I would want to chat about your experiences of working at the YOT, without going into many personal details of why you ended up there. I'm most interested in who was involved and what was helpful or not helpful. Any question you didn't want to answer would be totally fine to miss out. I'm also interviewing lots of workers but I think it's really important to get the opinions of young people themselves.

I'd also be interested to chat to any parents/carers who would be willing to meet me. This could be on the same day, even together if that is what you would find easiest. I would hope to spend about 30-45 minutes with you, and would record the interview on a little digital recorder. When I write up my research, everything will be anonymous – no-one would be able to identify you or even [City] in what I write.

If you are interested in helping out, please reply to Sharon Hall at the address above, or leave a message for me on the YOT admin number, [phone number]. Any young person or parent/carer who meets me will be given a £10 HMV voucher to thank you for your time.

Thanks for reading,

Sharon Hall

PhD student, De Montfort University

Appendix 9. Information sheet for young people

Information Sheet for Young Person v 1.3

De Montfort University & [City] YOT—Research Interviews

Here is a sheet with a bit more information about the study. You are free to ask any questions about anything here either on the phone or when we meet. Like Sharon said in her first letter, you can choose not to answer any question asked. You are also free to pull out of the study if you change your mind.

What is the study about?

Sharon is researching improving the way YOTs work with young people and understanding better how workers can see the whole picture when trying to help young people.

Why have I been chosen?

Sharon asked the admin staff to contact young people who had been on orders for specific offences, but who had finished working with the YOT. Apart from that, it is up to you to decide if you want to take part.

Who is involved with the study?

Sharon Hall is the researcher - she is a student at De Montfort University. [City] YOT have agreed to have Sharon do a placement with them, and she will interview workers from the YOT and other connected teams. No-one from the team will be told what you or your family say, but the general things found out will be shared with them and written up in Sharon's PhD project.

One important exception is if you tell Sharon anything that makes her think you or another person is at risk of harm. If this happens she must tell someone at the YOT and the recording could be used by police.

Do I have to take part?

No - Sharon is wanting willing volunteers only - if you change your mind at any time you are free to pull out - you don't have to give a reason.

What if I want to complain?

If possible, please ask Sharon any questions or talk about complaints with her. But you are also free to talk to someone at the YOT [named manager] or Sharon's supervisor at De Montfort University (Brian Stout) if you need to complain. Their phone numbers will be on the consent form you get when you meet with Sharon.

What is involved?

Sharon will meet with you (and a parent or carer if you want) at the YOT at a time that suits you, in a private room. She will chat to you for about 30-45 minutes about your experiences of working at the YOT, without going into many personal details of why you ended up there. We will agree beforehand which worker you would like to be around to support you and chat afterwards if you want. The interview will be recorded and transcribed (listened to and written down in full). You can have a copy of the interview if you want. When typing up the interview, all names and places will be removed and the documents will be kept securely. After the research is finished the recording will be erased. To thank you, you will receive a £10 HMV voucher.

What will happen to the results of the study?

Sharon will write up all her research for her PhD which will be marked in 2010. She also wants to publish papers about the research and give presentations at conferences to other workers. No individuals will be able to be identified at any point but quotes from interviews may be used.

More questions? Call Sharon at the YOT on [phone number]

Appendix 10. Consent form for young people/ parents

Consent form for Young Person and/or parent or carer v 1.2

Study number:
Participant Identification Number for the Study:

De Montfort University & [City] YOT—Research Interviews

This is where you give your consent (agreement) to be part of the study. You need to decide if you are happy with the three main parts, then sign to agree to be interviewed.

1. I have read / listened to the information on the sheet (version .....) for this study. I have been able to think about the information, ask questions and am happy to take part. ☐

2. I understand that it is my choice to take part and that I can pull out at any time, without giving a reason. ☐

3. I understand that none of my personal details will be written down, so no-one will be able to identify me or my family from any part of the research. I understand that Sharon will only pass on information to the YOT if I say something that makes her think there is a risk of harm to me or another person. ☐

I agree to take part in this study.

Name of young person	Name of parent/carer (if present)	Name of researcher
...../...../.....	...../...../.....	...../...../.....
Date	**Date**	**Date**
.....	.....	.....
Signature	**Signature**	**Signature**

When completed, 1 copy for participant, 1 for researcher file.

More questions? Call Sharon at the YOT on [phone number]

If you need to complain, contact [named manager] at the YOT, [phone number] or Dr Brian Stout at De Montfort University,

Appendix 11. Initial contact letter to parents/ carers

[YOT Address]

28th January 2009

Dear …….

My name is Sharon Hall and I am a research student at De Montfort University in Leicester. I used to work with young people at Birmingham Youth Offending Service. I am doing some research into improving the way YOTs work and understanding better how workers can see the whole picture when trying to help young people.

Just to reassure you, the admin staff at [City] YOT agreed to pass this on for me. Unless you agree, I will not receive any of your personal details.

If you or the young person agreed to meet me, I would want to chat about your experiences of working with the YOT, without going into many personal details of why you ended up there. I'm most interested in who was involved and what was helpful or not helpful. Any question you didn't want to answer would be totally fine to miss out. I'm also interviewing lots of workers but I think it's really important to get the opinions of young people and their families. I will get in touch again to gain your consent if the young person is interested to take part but is under 16.

Depending on what you prefer, the interviews could be on the same day, even together if that is what the young person would find easiest. I would hope to spend about 30-45 minutes with you, and would record the interview on a little digital recorder. When I write up my research, everything will be anonymous – no-one would be able to identify you or even [City] in what I write.

If you are interested in helping out, please reply to Sharon Hall at the address above, or leave a message for me on the YOT admin number, [phone number]. Any young person or parent/carer who meets me will be given a £10 HMV voucher to thank you for your time.

Thanks for reading,

Sharon Hall

PhD student, De Montfort University

Appendix 12. Information sheet for parents/ carers

Information Sheet for Family v 1.3

De Montfort University & [City] YOT—Research Interviews

Here is a sheet with a bit more information about the study. You are free to ask any questions about anything here either on the phone or when we meet. Like Sharon said in her first letter, you can choose not to answer any question asked. You are also free to pull out of the study if you change your mind.

What is the study about?

Sharon is researching improving the way YOTs work with young people and families and understanding better how workers can see the whole picture when trying to help young people.

Why have I been chosen?

Sharon asked the admin staff to contact families of young people who had been on orders for specific offences, but who had finished working with the YOT. Apart from that, it is up to you to decide if you want to take part.

Who is involved with the study?

Sharon Hall is the researcher - she is a student at De Montfort University. [City] YOT have agreed to have Sharon do a placement with them, and she will interview workers from the YOT and other connected teams. No-one from the team will be told what you or your family say, but the general things found out will be shared with them and written up in Sharon's PhD project.

One important exception is if you tell Sharon anything that makes her think that any young person is at risk of harm. If this happens she must tell someone at the YOT and the recording could be used by police.

Do I have to take part?

No - Sharon is wanting willing volunteers only - if you change your mind at any time you are free to pull out - you don't have to give a reason.

What if I want to complain?

If possible, please ask Sharon any questions or talk about complaints with her. But you are also free to talk to someone at the YOT]named manager] or Sharon's supervisor at De Montfort University (Brian Stout) if you need to complain. Their phone numbers will be on the consent form you get when you meet with Sharon.

What is involved?

Sharon will meet with you at the YOT at a time that suits you, in a private room. She will chat to you for about 30-45 minutes about your experiences of working at the YOT, without going into many personal details of why you ended up there. We will agree beforehand which worker you would like to be around to support you and chat afterwards if you want. The interview will be recorded and transcribed (listened to and written down in full). You can have a copy of the interview if you want. When typing up the interview, all names and places will be removed and the documents will be kept securely. After the research is finished the recording will be erased. To thank you, you will receive a £10 HMV voucher.

What will happen to the results of the study?

Sharon will write up all her research for her PhD which will be marked in 2010. She also wants to publish papers about the research and give presentations at conferences to other workers. No individuals will be able to be identified at any point but quotes from interviews may be used.

More questions? Call Sharon at the YOT on [phone number]

Appendix 13. Approximate interview schedule for young person interview

Outline for Young Person interview

Thanks for coming

Who I am

Their choices to answer or not answer any question

Consent form to sign

OK to put recorder on?

Recap and verbal consent, assurances re: confidentiality

Who did they see from the YOT?

How long did they attend? What Order were they on?

Anyone else involved like Social worker? CAMHS worker? Anyone from school?

Did anyone else in your family meet with these workers? Why?

What was the most helpful thing you remember?

Any other useful things?

Who was making the decisions about what to do next? Anyone else?

Can you think of anything that would have helped you but that didn't happen?

Was any part unhelpful? Why?

Do you have any suggestions for workers so they could help people with your experiences more?

Do you think the workers saw the whole picture? What parts did they not see?

I'm trying to understand the whole picture to help young people who've got in trouble for sexually harming. Any ideas what this might look like?

Which parts of this did you work on with the YOT or other people?

Any other ideas or things you'd like to say?

Thanks so much!

Appendix 14. Approximate interview schedule for parent/ carer

Outline for Parent interview

Thanks for coming

Who I am

Their choices to answer or not answer any question

Consent form to sign

OK to put recorder on?

Recap and verbal consent, assurances re: confidentiality

Who did they see from the YOT?

How long did their young person attend? What Order were they on?

Anyone else involved like Social worker? CAMHS worker? Anyone from school?

How much contact did you have with the YOT?

What was the most helpful thing you remember?

Any other useful things?

Who was making the decisions about what to do next? Anyone else?

Can you think of anything that would have helped you/ your family but that didn't happen?

Was any part unhelpful? Why?

Do you have any suggestions for workers so they could help people like you and your family more?

Do you think the workers saw the whole picture? What parts did they not see?

I'm trying to understand the whole picture to help young people who've got in trouble for sexually harming. Any ideas what this might look like?

Which parts of this do you think were addressed by the YOT or other people?

Any other ideas or things you'd like to say?

Thanks so much!

Appendix 15. Approximate interview schedule for internal professional

Outline for Internal Professional interview

Thanks for agreeing to meet me

Check consent form and sign

OK to put recorder on?

Recap and verbal consent, assurances re: confidentiality

Please tell me about where you work and your client group

What is your role there?

How long have you worked there?

What is your work background? How does this influence your working style?

How would you describe the team ethos / style of working / main aims?

Would you say the team work holistically?

What would/does it mean to work holistically?

Present 4 main areas identified for working holistically

Any opinions relating to seeing the whole picture
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to using creative/alternative methods
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to working with the young person and their family/peers
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to multi-agency working
Any challenges in this area?

What might be the opposite of holistic working? Is there a time when targeted is better?

Any opinions about whether Evidence based practice is necessary or restrictive?

How do you decide which areas to prioritise if there is not time to address each of these areas?

Any opinions about how well residential or custodial settings can work holistically?

Do you have any more ideas about holistic working with this client group?

Any questions? Thanks so much!

Appendix 16. Approximate interview schedule for external professional

Outline for External Professional interview

Thanks for agreeing to meet me

Check consent form and sign

OK to put recorder on?

Recap and verbal consent, assurances re: confidentiality

Please tell me about where you work and your client group

What is your role there?

How long have you worked there?

What is your work background? How does this influence your working style?

How have you been involved with [City] YOT? Cases of YP who have sexually harmed?

What do you think it means to work holistically with young people who have sexually harmed?

What do you see as being your role / your agency's role in working holistically with each YP?

Present 4 main areas identified for working holistically

Any opinions relating to seeing the whole picture
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to using creative/alternative methods
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to working with the young person and their family/peers
Any challenges in this area?

Any opinions relating to multi-agency working
Any challenges in this area?

Can you identify any areas where improvements could be made by your agency or [City] YOT?

What might be the opposite of holistic working? Is there a time when targeted is better?

Any opinions about whether Evidence based practice is necessary or restrictive?

Any opinions about how well residential or custodial settings can work holistically?

Do you have any more ideas about holistic working with this client group?

Any questions? Thanks so much!

Appendix 17. Summary of respondents to Breadth Survey

ID	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	Job title	Job type
2*	Female	Black or Black British	30 - 39	Senior Social Worker	Social worker
3	Male	White	60 or over	Children's Service Manager	Manager
4	Female	White	40 - 49	Social Worker	Social worker
5	Female	White	40 - 49	Senior Social Worker	Social worker
6	Male	White	40 - 49	Mental Health Specialist	Therapist
7	Female	White	60 or over	[self employed]	Therapist
8	Female	Mixed	30 - 39	Clinical Psychologist	Therapist
9	Male	White	30 - 39	Children's Services Practitioner	Social worker
10	Male	Mixed	30 - 39	Specialist Social Worker	Social worker
11	Female	White	30 - 39	Senior Youth Justice Worker	Social worker
12	Female	White	30 - 39	Project Worker	Therapist
13	Female	Black or Black British	50 - 59	Senior Practitioner	Social worker
14	Female	White	50 - 59	Manager [named] HSB Team	Manager
15	Female	White	50 - 59	Director	Manager
16	Male	White	30 - 39	Deputy Head of Service	Manager
17	Female	White	50 - 59	Probation Officer	Probation Officer
19**	Female	White	40 - 49	Senior Practitioner Social Worker	Social worker
20	Female	White	Under 30	Operational Manager	Manager
21	Female	White	30 - 39	Operational Manager	Manager
22	Female	White	50 - 59	Practice manager: young people with HSB	Probation Officer
23	Male	White	30 - 39	Senior Practitioner	Social worker
24	Female	White	40 - 49	Operational Manager	Manager
25	Male	White	40 - 49	Children's Services Manager	Manager
26	Female	White	30 - 39	Forensic Psychologist	Therapist

(ID1 was the researcher's test entry. ** ID18 was a partially completed form submitted by participant 19. Both were deleted and not used within the analysis.)*

Appendix 18. Summary of interviewees during Depth Study

(numbering from 51 to avoid confusion with survey responses)

ID	Interviewee	Gender
51	Experienced senior YOT worker**	Female
52	YOT worker***	Female
53	External social worker	Female
54	YOT worker***	Male
55	Police officer at YOT	Male
56	Parent	Female
57	Experienced senior YOT worker**	Female
58	External social worker	Female
59	External therapist	See below*
60	External residential worker	Male
61	Young person	Male
62	External therapist	See below*
63	YOT worker***	Male
64	Volunteer panel member	Male
65	Volunteer panel member	Male
66	YOT worker***	Female
67	YOT worker***	Female
68	YOT worker***	Female
69	Police officer at YOT	Male
70	YOT worker***	Male
71	Experienced senior YOT worker**	Female
72	Young person	Male
73	YOT worker***	Female
74	Experienced senior YOT worker**	Female

* = Gender of therapists not disclosed here to limit identification. One was male, the other female.

** = More specifically this group included a team manager, two practice managers and a parenting worker, not labelled to limit identification.

***= This group included three case managers, two referral order liaison officers, a seconded probation officer, a victim worker and a specialist health worker, again limiting identification.

Appendix 19. List of meetings attended by Researcher during Depth Study

Meeting	Location	Attended by
Local Health Steering Group	YOT building	YOT staff (5+), PCT staff, CAMHS workers, School nurses
YOT Managers Meeting	YOT building	Local YOT managers & middle managers
Risk Audit Meeting	YOT building	YOT middle managers & case workers
Local Police Operation follow up Meeting (Sexual Exploitation)	Local Council office	Local police, probation, youth workers, YOT staff (2), LGBT officer
Intensive Intervention Project Management Meeting	YOT building	YOT managers & middle managers, DCSF taskforce, Crime partnership worker
Sexual Exploitation Network Meeting	YOT building	Police, Youth Service, YOT staff (2)
Looked After Child Review Meeting	External placement	Residential staff (4), External YOT worker (1), YOT staff (1), social workers (2), therapists (2), young person, Reviewing Officer
MAPPA Level 2 Meeting	Local Probation office	Probation staff, YOT staff
Regional Boys and Young Men Exploitation Forum	Regional office	Regional workers from range of relevant projects, YOTs and Missing Persons
MAPPA Level 2 Meeting	YOT building	Probation staff, Police, Housing rep, Nurse, Connexions worker, Letting manager, Drugs worker, social worker, Support worker, YOT staff (3)
Risk Panel Meeting	YOT building	YOT middle managers, case workers
Regional Forum, Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking	Local Council office	Police, YOT staff, Human Trafficking expert, Regional workers,
MAPPP Level 3	YOT building	YOT managers (2), Senior Probation staff (3), Prison Service Liaison, Senior Police (3), Children's Services (1), Safeguarding Nurse
High Support Team Meeting	YOT building	YOT staff, High support team & RJ staff
Sexual Exploitation Forum Meeting	YOT building	Police (2), YOT staff (2), Youth Service, Children's Services
Assessment & Early Intervention Panel Meeting	Local Authority office	Children's Services (2), Reviewing Officer, YOT staff (2)
Professionals Meeting	Local Authority office	Social workers (2), External therapists (2), YOT staff (1),
ACRONYMS CAMHS = Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services; DCSF = Department of Children, Schools & Families; LGBT= Lesbian Gay, Bisexual Transgender; PCT= Primary Care Trust; RJ= Restorative Justice		